SHAKER COMMUNISM;

OR,

TESTS OF DIVINE INSPIRATION.

THE SECOND CHRISTIAN OR GENTILE PENTECOSTAL CHURCH,

AS EXEMPLIFIED BY SEVENTY COMMUNITIES OF SHAKERS IN AMERICA.

BY

F. W. EVANS.

MOUNT LEBANON, COLUMBIA COUNTY, NEW YORK, U.S.A.

"They had all things in common."—Acts ii., 44.

London:

PUBLISHED BY JAMES BURNS, 15, SOUTHAMPTON ROW.

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TO THE READER.

THE following "Tests" are offered to the Public as an explanation of the great enigma and paradox of the age—Spiritual *Manifestations;* and also as a solution of what has often, and not inappropriately, been designated the "great problem of the age,"—a *social organisation that shall secure, not merely "the greatest good to the greatest number," but also the greatest good to the whole number* of its members.

This is done by unfolding and illustrating those radical principles upon which alone such organisation, or system, can ever be based; as is demonstrated by the successful experiments of some eighteen different bodies of persons, in various States of the Union, covering or extending over a period of more than seventy years, by the often-persecuted, greatly-misrepresented, and little-understood people called *Shakers.*

August, 1871. F. W. EVANS.

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PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

ANN LEE, the Founder of the Shaker Communities, with her eight companions, arose out of the Quaker Order. These were the last of the "two witnesses"—the highest round in the ladder that reaches from earth to heaven.

They fled to the wilderness of America, from the face of the "fiery flying serpent"—the Church and State Government of the "Image of the Beast"—the Protestant Episcopal Church of England—she being the eldest daughter of the great "Mother of Harlots," who loves to *commit adultery with the State*, and to "exercise all the power of the first Beast" by religious persecution in the *name* of the State.

To this Hegira, Ann Lee and her company of saints were inspired by various spiritual manifestations, and by visions which each one of them received, wherein they were directed to go to America, and expressly assured that the American Revolution would terminate successfully, and that a Civil Government would be founded, protecting all people in their liberty of conscience, person, and press; and that there "the Church of God would be established and would prosper." In that spiritual, religious, and glorious faith, they crossed the Atlantic, and landing in New York on a Sabbath afternoon, they marched in a body up the middle of Pearl Street, until they came opposite to a house where a family by the name of Cunningham resided, who were sitting outside their door at the time. Here they halted, and Ann Lee, going up to the woman and calling her by name, said, "I am commissioned of the Almighty God to preach the everlasting Gospel to America, and an Angel commanded me to come to this house, and to make a home for me and my people." Without any words, she was immediately taken in and kindly cared for. And that house was the Shaker home until they had homes of their own.

A descendant of this hospitable family recently made a journey from Washington, D.C., to Mount Lebanon, to acquaint the author with the above facts. And it was an heirloom the value of which he justly appreciated.

As Mother Ann had prophesied, so the Revolution ended in the birth of a free Government upon this earth; which is even yet but in its infancy.

The rights of man were proclaimed, and a Constitution formed, excluding priests of all sects from its offices; prohibiting the union of Church and State; and enabling the man who believes in no God, and the one who believes in twenty, to be equal in the eye of the law in a court of justice.

This blessed result was attained principally through the labours of those whom the Orthodox Anti-Christians, under the instigation of religious hate, opprobriously termed "Infidels." They were mostly Deists, having discarded the Christian *name*, as their religious persecutors had already discarded the spirit of Christ.

Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, Paine, and their fellows—these shed no martyrs' blood themselves, and they made it impossible for the wicked priests to do it *legally*.

Yet they lived before their time, and were beyond the people; and hence the Constitution finally framed was but a compromise between the Declaration of Rights and the actual condition of the people in all the States.

American Slavery was left as a stain upon their honour—a lasting, withering curse to the United States, and the direct cause of the late tremendous Civil War, wherein the nation lost, wasted, and destroyed the property that had been acquired and accumulated by the violation of the Infidel "declaration" that "all human beings are created free and equal."

"Try the Spirits." The basis and beginning of all knowledge is a consciousness of our own being. To learn anything, we must first know something. The less a being knows, the more difficult it is for it to receive knowledge; and the more it knows, the easier it can add thereto. "As the mouth tasteth meats, so doth the ear try words."

"How can we reason but from what we know?"

Man can only try propositions presented to him by the truth already in his possession.

Error is the result either of admitting that to be self-evident or true which is *not*, or of false deduction and illogical reasonings from that which *is* self-evidently true.

In a paper published in Auburn, by T. L. Harris, devoted to the spiritual manifestations, the principle of trying the spirits by some rules, doctrines, and principles was adopted, and those spirits whose revelations and communications were founded upon and reconcilable with such principles and rules were to be accepted and believed *as true;* and those revelations and communications which were not so founded, or that conflicted with such rules, principles, and doctrines, were to be rejected *as false.*

This was a true and correct principle, and a proper manner of proceeding, and is the only one in which men, as rational, accountable beings, can possibly proceed and be justified. For it is certain that no portion of the human family are so lost and degraded as not to be in possession of some truths by which they can try *their* ministering spirits. The danger is (as was the case in the above instance) that rules and doctrines which, equally with the spirits, require to be tested and proved, will be adopted as the standard of judgment by which to "try the spirits."

The Auburn company laid down the doctrines of the Trinity, the Deity of Jesus Christ, his vicarious sufferings and death, the resurrection of the body, &c., as infallible criterions of judgment, and all spirits who did not subscribe to this standard were at once proscribed and banished.

So that as all these doctrines, and almost every other rule adopted by *them*, were taken for granted as *true*, and no attempt at proof having been made, though each one was in itself evidently erroneous, it was therefore impossible for those persons to have communications from any very enlightened and exalted spirit. The mathematician first begins with self-evident propositions such as all men would admit, as that one and one make two, that the two equal parts of an apple are equivalent to the whole apple; and then he proceeds logically, step by step, to the deepest and most sublime problems. This, as far as the nature of the subject will admit, is designed to be the method of procedure in the following treatise, and *then* the resulting doctrines are adopted as a standard by which to try the spirits and all spiritual manifestations, revelations, gifts, or visions that may come or purport to come from the spirit-world.

A LETTER OF INFORMATION

TO PERSONS DESIROUS OF BECOMING MEMBERS

OF THE

ORDER OF SHAKERS.

—o—

ALL who are desirous of obtaining information, with the view of uniting with the Society, may correspond with Elder F. W. EVANS, Mount Lebanon, Columbia Co., New York, U. S. A.

Persons, male or female, having read the publications of Believers, and endorsing their principles, may become members of the Order on the following conditions:—

By paying all just debts to the best of their ability, and fulfilling all legal and equitable contracts, and righting all wrongs as far as possible.

If over fifty years of age, or having small children, they had better correspond previous to coming;

Or if applicants have much property, or are in a prosperous business it is well to write before making any important changes.

Single persons, who are free, may come at their *own option*, bearing in mind the important fact that SHAKERISM is "RELIGIOUS COMMUNISM."

The careful perusal and study of the following publications is earnestly recommended to all who are interested in Shakerism:—

SHAKER COMMUNISM; or, Tests of Divine Inspiration. The Second Christian or Gentile Pentecostal Church, as Exemplified by Seventy Communities of Shakers in America. By F. W. EVANS. Wrappers, 1s. 6d.; cloth, 2s. 6d.

This work traces the progress of the Church through the three previous dispensations, culminating in the Shaker, or Second Pentecostal Church. It presents in a clear and forcible manner the essential religious principles upon which Shakerism is founded, and upon which alone a community can exist.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A SHAKER. Being the Life and Experiences of Elder EVANS. To which is added, "An Exposition of the Apocalypse, and its Bearings upon Shakerism." With Photograph. Cloth, 3s. 6d.

ANN LEE, the Founder of the Shakers. A Biography, with Memoirs of her Companions. Also a Compendium of the Origin, History, Principles, Rules and Regulations, Government, and Doctrines of the United Society of Believers in Christ's second appearing. By F. W. EVANS. Wrappers, 2s.; cloth, 3s. 6d.

THE SHAKER. A monthly paper issued by the Order. Annual Subscription, 5s.

London: J. BURNS, 15, Southampton Row, Bloomsbury Square, W.C.

PART I.

RUDIMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE PATRIARCHAL ERA.

"For the Lord hath made all things for their use."—*Ecclus.* xxxix., 2.

SECTION I.

CHAPTER I.

USE.

MAN :—Is he the product of Nature, or of a Supreme Being? He is now in a *fallen* condition. Nature is either perfect or imperfect. If *Nature* be the author of man, and she be *imperfect*, then there is no rational hope that he will ever be raised from his present fallen condition. If *Nature* were the author of man, and she be *perfect*, then it may with propriety be asked how her child, *man*, became *imperfect;* also, how it happened that Nature, which possessed the power to bring man into existence a *perfect creature*, should ever have suffered him to become anything other than what she at first made him. And again: If she, *Nature*, lacked the ability to keep him perfect when he was so, how can she possess sufficient power to *restore* him to that condition, or to keep and preserve him in it, supposing him to be so restored? The product of Nature, man, could not have *fallen* unless Nature also fell, for he would not have been a free agent, as Nature could not bring a *free agent* into being; for free agency presupposes the existence of two

opposite powers, controlled and directed by two primary antagonistic Intelligences or Beings.

Therefore, none but a free agent could fall, or be again raised after it had fallen; for to *rise* also presupposes the existence of a superior intelligent Power and Being, by whose agency the resurrection is effected. It is, therefore, clearly demonstrable that *Nature* was *not* the originator of the human race; and that there is a *Supreme Being—God*, an invisible Power and Wisdom, the Author and Creator of man and of all good things (Gen. i., 31), as may be plainly seen by the visible creation. "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made."

Creation consists of two parts: the outward and visible, which may be denominated the *body;* and the interior and invisible —spiritual—part, which may be designated the *soul.*

The outer visible body, with all its elements, must be directed and governed by the living power of the interior or spiritual part—the soul.

Man, male and female, was brought forth as the highest production of the elements of this world, and represents both parts: his *outward*, or animal being, the visible body—a microcosm of the outward earthly world; and his *interior*, or soul, a microcosm—an organisation of the invisible or spiritual world.

The *order* of his creation was, for the *animal* organisation, which connected him with the external world, to be directed and governed by the powers of his superior part, or living soul; and for the *spirit* to be under the guidance of the Divine laws of his being, through the medium of which he was rendered accountable to his Creator for all his goings. All the faculties of man were originally good and innocent, not excepting that of *procreation.*

These, through the insinuations of a foreign evil influence, he was led to corrupt by *making* PLEASURE, *not* USE, *the end of their action and exercise.* This is *lust.*

Man, in his sphere, was *not* a machine, *but a free agent* to

choose between obedience and disobedience to good or evil. For it is impossible for man to be a living, rational being, without having sensible self-acting life; and the power of choice must be the result.

The ability to receive, and the desire of, knowledge in man, were necessary for the development of all the faculties pertaining to his physical and spiritual organisation, and in themselves were perfectly innocent. By these, he would have increased in his understanding of the order of his creation, and of the will of God respecting him—how to subdue or govern the world, and to keep it and himself in order.

But, under the instigation of evil, the innate love of knowledge was used to "seek out many inventions"—knowledge of evil things; and it thus became the medium through which the tempter inspired his own principles of life, by which man, not waiting to be appropriately developed, or to be guided by superior wisdom into the appointed time and season for procreation, was *untimely* led into the work of generation. And thus was implanted in man the principle of *lust.*

Without revelation from the spirit-world, man is ever liable to mistake the Divine agency, by which all the operations of the visible worlds are effected, and to ascribe them to some mysterious imaginary power which he calls *Nature,* but respecting which he can give no intelligent information. All effects, whether they be natural or spiritual, are often thus referred to this unknown and unintelligent cause; which yet leaves the mind of man in a state of doubt and uncertainty, and also with an undefined, dissatisfied feeling.

But the unchangeable nature of the constituent elements of the visible worlds, and the regularity and harmony of the laws by which they are governed, resulting, as they do, in nought but *useful ends* and purposes, clearly reveal to the rational mind a Supreme Intelligence, of omnipotent power and wisdom, possessed of a superior organisation to all other subsistences; for it is self-evident that no intelligent organisation could be derived where no intelligent organisation exists. "Understand,

ye brutish; and ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? and he that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?" (Ps. xciv., 8-10.) As no visible thing has power to organise itself, of necessity all organisations are, by gradation, derived from an unoriginated primary intelligent Being or Organisation. And, as no derivative can equal the original, all visible organisations must be inferior to the original Supreme Organisation or Being.

In a recent "Treatise on Revelation,"* the object is to prove the existence of a communication between the natural and spiritual worlds, continuously, from the creation of man to the present time; whilst the object of the *present* treatise is to establish a standard, or rules, by which all men may judge or discriminate between the true and false, the good and evil, in all such communications.

In order the better to attend to this principal object, certain points will now be assumed *as true*, as that there is a God; a spirit-world, which to the natural man is the prototype and a transcript of this; and that in all ages there have been intelligent communications, from one to the other, which have been both true and false, good and bad, and sometimes a compound of all; and that the Bible contains the most authentic record of such spiritual intercourse—especially of that which has come in the most direct line of the Divine order, but not the ten-millionth part of all the revelations that have been made to man, individually and collectively. An Apostle declared that if all that Jesus alone said and did had been written, "the world could not have contained the books." How much less, then, would it contain a record of *all* which has passed between the natural and spiritual spheres!

No truth can be more certain than that God is a *God of order* and not of confusion. (See 1 Cor. xiv., 33.) The external creation alone demonstrates it. Astronomy, natural philosophy,

* By Elder William Leonard, of Harvard.

and chemistry are witnesses of it; as are all the sciences, which bring to light the laws of God as they exist and are immutably established in the physical world. Every thing, even to the minutest particle of sand, derives its form from, and is governed by, some law inherent in itself. So true is it that even the smallest atom, equally with the most stupendous world, is embraced within the circle of *cause and effect*, originating in the Divine mind.

It is in this light that the very hairs of our head are all numbered, and that not a sparrow falls to the ground by chance. "He" that "hath weighed the world in a balance, by measure hath he measured the times, and by number hath he numbered the times. And he doth not move nor stir them until the said measure be fulfilled." (2 Esdras, iv., 36, 37.) The vegetable world shows forth order in all the infinite variety of *its* productions. There is not a plant so vile as not to exhibit system and beauty in its organisation; each branch, and twig, and leaf is but an outward manifestation of an invisible and eternal law.

The *animal kingdom*, from the microscopic insect to the half-reasoning elephant, is also subject to, and governed by, laws, called *instinct*, far more enduring and unchangeable than the "laws of the *Medes and Persians*," and which lead them (in a state of original freedom) to do, in all respects, that which is for their best present good and future welfare. "This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working." (Is. xxviii., 29.) And of *man*, who is "so fearfully and wonderfully made," that, in his outward form, he is in truth a perfect organisation of all the principles of law, order, and beauty pertaining to our world, can we rationally believe that *he* was not designed to be governed and regulated by fixed and permanent laws in his moral and spiritual nature and experience?

"God made man upright" (Eccles. vii., 29) throughout. And, while upright, he was obedient to the physical, moral, and spiritual laws of his being: every thought, word, and action was but the effect proceeding from these invisible causes, and

tended towards the health and strength of his body, mind, and soul. The whole creation, while it abode in its original integrity, was justly pronounced "*very good.*" But how widely different from that is its present condition, let the general verdict of all classes—religious and irreligious—determine.

SUMMARY.

The natural creation, governed by fixed immutable laws, all of which tend towards some *useful end and purpose.*

Man the microcosm of the world, and the product of nature, under God.

By the insinuations of evil, operating upon his innate love of knowledge, man was induced to violate the great law of USE, the first law of creation, by *perpetrating a premature and* UNTIMELY *act of generation.*

Thus the fall of man was effected by his rejecting the teachings and influences of Divine ministering spirits, friends who would have kept him in subjection to all the physical and moral laws of his nature; and by listening to and obeying the whisperings and suggestions of evil spirits, whereby in his actions he began to seek, as an end, *gratification*, and *not use.*

CHAPTER II.

LAW.

BY dividing the spiritual history of the human race into four great Eras—the Patriarchal, the Mosaic, and the First and Second Christian—we can the more easily trace the creation, the fall, and the rise of man.

In the First Era, previous to the *fall*, man is represented, in the Scriptures, as enjoying easy and uninterrupted communion with spiritual beings. But since that event, angel visits have been "few and far between." And in what way, and by what means, man has fallen to his present degraded and deplorable

state, is vividly portrayed and set forth by the Prophet Isaiah (xxiv., 5, 6): "The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, and broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate."

Thus it was disobedience to well-known laws and established ordinances, and the breaking of a solemn covenant which God made with all his creatures when he directed them to "multiply and replenish the earth," and which was pre-eminently designed to be an "everlasting covenant" for the regulation of MAN in the chief and most important operation of nature—*procreation*—that constituted him a fallen being. This "everlasting covenant" which God made with his creatures was, *that no animals should use their reproductive powers and organs for any other than the simple purpose of procreation*, and was the sole condition upon which God would impart to them the power to bring forth offspring in their own likeness and after their own kind, in the primitive Divine order of "*very good*."

The violation of this covenant, which *man*, on his part, accepted by marriage, and to which he, as the head and lord of all creation, should have yielded the most implicit obedience, is the root of the transgression of every other law and ordinance that has ever been broken by man, and it was this act that originated and implanted the principle of lust in him; and when lust was thus conceived, it brought forth sin; and when sin was finished, it brought forth darkness of mind and soul, and *even death;* so that his intercourse with good spiritual friends was interrupted and confused by the evil spirits to whom he had hearkened and whose counsel he had followed; and therefore "his servant he became unto whom he had yielded himself a servant to obey" (Rom. vi., 16); so that gradually he lost the knowledge of those laws and ordinances, and of the covenant that he had so shamefully broken.

"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imagi-

nations, and their foolish heart was *darkened*. Wherefore, God gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves. God gave them up to vile affections. God gave them over to a reprobate mind. Being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness ; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, covenant breakers," &c., &c. (Rom. i.)

These various evils, with very many others, are thus set forth as being the *necessary* effects of the human race having once broken and departed from the original law and design of God in creating them male and female (*i.e., that they should copulate for* PROCREATION ONLY, *and* NOT *for gratification*) ; and they found no stopping-place in their descent into the hell of lust, which is truly a bottomless pit.

And thus the human race in the First Era, having once entered upon a course of evil—that is, of making *sensual pleasure*, and *not use*, the end and object in their every action—did not cease in their insane career until they had "filled the earth with violence;" finally attained to that degree of lawlessness that "every imagination of their hearts was evil, and that continuously." (Gen. vi., 5.) "God was not in all their thoughts." *How then could man continue to exist while living in perpetual disobedience to the laws of his existence ?*

"For God made not death ; neither hath he pleasure in the destruction of the living. For he created all things, that they might have their being : and the generations of the world were healthful ; and there is no poison of destruction in them, nor the kingdom of death upon the earth. But ungodly men, with their works and words, called it to them ; for when they thought to have it their friend, they consumed to nought and made a covenant with it." (Wisdom of Solomon, i., 13-16.)

Thus man, who was originally good, and (so long as he was a law-keeper) in daily communion with the spirit-world, and entirely under the Divine influence, when he broke the first

and most important law pertaining to the propagation of his race, opened the way for evil of every name and nature; and began to cut himself off from all spiritual intercourse, except that which was from an *evil* source—the lower spheres. "Darkness commenced to cover the earth, and gross darkness the people." (Is. lx., 2.) So that each succeeding generation came into being under increasingly perverted and corrupt influences, until they degenerated into a state of the most profound spiritual ignorance, even denying the existence of the spirits of evil that led and governed them daily; as they also denied the spirits of good by which alone they could have been saved from the destruction that awaited them.

SUMMARY.

Before man fell, he had easy and uninterrupted communion with good spirits.

God made an everlasting covenant with all animals, that they should not use their reproductive powers for any other than the simple purpose of procreation; and the laws of this covenant were primitively implanted in man as in all other animals.

This covenant man broke, and thus opened the way for the transgression of every other law that pertained to that Era; for man became a servant to those evil spirits unto whom he had yielded himself a servant to obey, until he was only evil. Then came the flood; for it was impossible for man to continue to exist in perpetual and entire *disobedience* to all the laws of his existence.

Man, when under Divine revelation, kept all the laws of his Era, and had happiness—*life*.

When under *false and evil revelations*, he broke all the laws of his Era, and had misery—*death*.

The flood, like the cholera, was an effect of violated laws.

CHAPTER III.

TESTS.

To the present existing generations of men upon earth, upon whom the spiritual light of God has never yet shone, the assertions and denunciations contained in Romans i., &c., cannot in full be applied; for *they* never "knew God" aright. In the earlier ages, men possessed a knowledge of God *and of* HIS LAWS *pertaining to* THEIR ORDER, but lost it by wickedness. "They did not love to retain God in their knowledge;" while the present generations must be brought to a knowledge of God, and of *those laws*, before they can be judged by them and reclaimed from their wickedness.

The last and only hope of man is *Revelation*—the true science; for he finds himself born into a deranged, disordered world, and possessed of an inherent constitutional proclivity to evil; and that himself has also inherited in *his own person*, from his progenitors, its accumulated fruits.

Both the evil and its effects are, in the premises, independent of his own volition and free agency.

It is, therefore, only through the medium of *Revelation* that he can be brought to understand the *causes* that have worked his ruin, and thus come to a knowledge of the primary fundamental laws of God and Nature, by the continued violation of which he has been reduced to his present deplorable condition; for the experience of thousands of years has proved that Nature alone, or natural science, cannot impart that knowledge.

Revelation, therefore, is the rock, the foundation, upon which he must build, or never be saved from the effects of the fall, and find eternal life. And here is the trying point, for the prediction of Paul is fulfilled: "This know also, that, in the last days, perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers

of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God," &c. (2 Tim. iii., 1-4.)

It is sin—such things as these—that separates between the soul and good ministering spirits, and that unites the soul to and invites the ministrations of dark and evil spirits. Consequently, when the spiritual faculties in man (which have become dormant) are quickened and developed by the ministrations of *good* spirits, *evil* ones stand ready to occupy the avenue thus opened, and a mixture in their communications of truth and error, good and bad, is the result.

Hence the necessity for a higher standard of judgment, which was set up in the third Era, in which time mankind were brought into a nearer relation to a higher order of spirits than theretofore had ever had any direct access to them, and with whom they were thenceforth to hold communion, and travel in that Gospel ("which the angels desire to look into") by which they expected to be judged with men, and, through obedience thereto, be participators with them of its salvation: these were the justified spirits of men which constituted "the Church of the first-born which are written in heaven," or first Christian Church existing in the spirit-world.

And even *there* the spirit of error, or Antichrist, was also liable to work, though perhaps with less power than among those in the Church upon earth. Therefore, that faithful watchman, *Paul*, after saying to his brethren, "Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly (or rather *spiritual*) Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels" (Heb. xii., 22), sounded the trumpet of alarm in the holy Mount of Zion upon earth, when he, after referring them to the well-known Gospel doctrines of Christ, said, "Though we, or an ANGEL FROM HEAVEN, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If *any* man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." (Gal. i., 8, 9.) How imperatively essential, then, is it that man should be possessed of some impeccable rule or

test by which to protect himself from the shafts of evil thus projected from the spirit-spheres; and projected, too, through the operation of those very faculties by which alone his resurrection can ever be effected. To this end, must he not receive a knowledge of the original laws of God as established in nature, and of the great *fundamental law of animal being in particular*, in the breach of which consisted the very first transgression?

This knowledge would operate as a key to the human mind, by which to unlock the mysteries of iniquity, whether they be of ancient and venerable date, and covered over with the moss of antiquity, or the product of more modern *spiritual manifestations;* and would thereby enable man to burst the bands of darkness and death and to "cut the cords of sin" that now hold and fasten him to the earth; by causing him to return to *first principles*, and thus to "discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not" (Mal. iii., 18); and that he may not only "*try* the spirits," and all their teachings and doctrines, purporting to come from the invisible world, but also be in possession of an infallible standard, or criterion, by which he can judge them with a righteous judgment.

Every cycle or dispensation of the work of God commenced *in Divine revelation*, by which its *foundations* were laid. And, to support and perfect the work of each dispensation, a continued revelation was also indispensably requisite; for, whenever (from whatever cause) the gifts of the Divine Spirit ceased, a "falling away" among the professors of that order was the inevitable result. "Where there is no vision, the people" soon "perish." (Prov. xxix., 18.) Such a "*falling away*" and "*perishing*" have befallen the Church of each of the three first great Cycles, Epochs, or Eras.

But, although a continued revelation was always needful, by which to know the then present will of God, yet an all-important principle has ever been paramount to all others, in every age of the world; and that is, AN UNERRING RULE, *by*

which to judge, distinguish, and know divinely-inspired revelations from those which are spurious and false. And such rule has been given in the established principles which formed the foundation of each dispensation.

For all revelation, however high its pretensions, that did not conform to, and was not in accordance with, those permanent rudimental principles, was, by reason as well as by Divine appointment, to be utterly rejected; and in all ages, the blessings and cursings or judgments of God upon the children of men were in proportion to their obedience or disobedience to this rule.

In the Dispensation of the Patriarchs, the well-defined principles of the *moral law of nature* (as already set forth) formed the foundation of that Dispensation, and became the rule by which to try all future revelations or principles in that Era, through whatever spirit or from whatever source they might come. Hence, all who conformed to this law and rule were blessed of God, in their day and *generation*.

The line of the Patriarchs was noticed and blessed of God for their obedience thereto. Enoch and Noah were particularly distinguished therein, especially with regard to the law of procreation; they "walked with God."

"Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations." And for this cause God's covenant was established with him, and he was preserved from "perishing with the world of the ungodly." (2 Pet. ii., 5.) It is therefore evident that whatever revelations he received were in conformity with the fixed foundation principles of that dispensation.

On the contrary, the posterity of Cain (who was the seed of lust, and appears to have been the first fruit of transgression), designated "the *sons and daughters of men*," and also the apostates from the Patriarchal order, who violated the Moral Law, and would not hearken to the revelations enjoining obedience thereto, incurred the Divine displeasure, and were overwhelmed by the destroying Deluge.

SUMMARY.

Men gradually lost the *knowledge* of those *laws of life* that they would not keep.

The present generations are begotten, born, and brought up in ignorance of the essential laws of their own order—the *generative.*

They have lost the true Divine revelation that they would not obey, and are now in gross darkness.

Sin is the cause of the universal spiritual ignorance which now prevails on the earth among all people; and mankind universally are so lost, ignorant, and wicked, that when *good* spirits open a communication, *evil* ones also use it.

Therefore man needs tests, or unerring rules, by which to "discern between the righteous and the wicked" spirits.

For this purpose, he must have a knowledge of the laws of God and of Nature as pertaining to each of the Four Eras; and especially of the great fundamental law of animal being, that permits sexual union for procreation only.

This is the key to, and root of, the whole "mystery of iniquity"—all the wickedness among mankind.

"Where there is no vision"—revelation,—"the people perish."

The rudimental *laws* of each Dispensation were the rules, or *tests,* by which to judge all spiritual communications. If any spirits taught disobedience to them, it was "because there was no light in them"—*they were evil.*

In the *First* Era, those who stood in the Divine revelation, were such as obeyed the laws of that Era. Thus, in and while fulfilling the great innate law of animal being (for every species to multiply and replenish the earth with its kind), they "*walked with God,*" because they were perfect in their generations,—the work of generation—the central impulsive object of that Era.

SECTION II.

CHAPTER I.

ESTABLISHED LAWS AND RULES OF THE SECOND OR MOSAIC ERA, AND MEDIUMS OF TRUE REVELATION.

THE next great Revelation of God, constituting the Second Era, commenced in *Abraham:* the object of which was to renew, enter into, and ratify the original covenant pertaining to *generation*, which had not only been broken, but even the knowledge thereof was lost from among the children of men. Of this covenant Abraham received the seal—*circumcision*—which was also the sign of the covenant pertaining to *regeneration*, or virgin purity, that God would make with the "Everlasting Father" of the new creation in the Third Era, or first Christian Dispensation. Therefore Abraham is *termed* the "father of the faithful," in both the typical and spiritual Israel.

This twofold object of the covenant with Abraham was also expressed in the Mosaic law, that was added (first) "because of transgression" by man, to teach him what the original law of the preceding dispensation was that he had transgressed, and to restrain him within certain bounds in future.

"By the law was the knowledge of sin" (see Rom. iii., 20), and of what was sinful. And from its requirements (see Lev. xv., 16, 18) men learned the depravity of their nature, *and that they could not cohabit, even in the* MARRIAGE *state, though* SIMPLY TO PROPAGATE THEIR SPECIES, *without* COMMITTING SIN AT THE SAME TIME; and that for every child, however legally brought into existence, a sin-offering was required to be made before the Lord as an atonement. (Lev. xii., 6, 8.)

Again, another object of the law was to prepare men for the work of Christ in the Third Dispensation. "The law was a schoolmaster to bring souls to Christ." (Gal. iii., 24.) This was done by types and figures, which were but shadows of good things to come. By circumcision, or the cutting off a portion of the organ of generation in man, and the days of separation

from the camp of the saints required of the female (see Lev. xii., 1-5) were foreshown *the cutting off and separation of the work of propagation from all that are in Christ.*

If man could not, even under the restraints and purifications of the Mosaic law, and that after he was circumcised, generate offspring without committing sin, then Christ certainly could not save him from his sin without, at the same time, cutting him off and severing him from the work of generation. For if "Christ came to fulfil the law, and not to destroy it," both himself and his followers must needs abstain and cease from all those things that the law of Moses condemns as sinful, and for which it requires a sin-offering.

Now, although Moses was ministered unto by angels, and the people obeyed him as an inspired leader, yet be it observed that his revelations formed a complete system of laws, statutes, and judgments, all of which were recorded; that the ten commandments were written upon tables of stone; and that these laws were taught to all the people, old and young; so that every one knew what to depend upon. And, be it further observed, no human governments are so unjust as not to publish their laws, that the people may know what they must do to live.

Yet Moses did not claim the exclusive right to inspiration, for he said that "he would that *all* the Lord's people were prophets;" knowing that, if they were all *true* "prophets," there would be no clash or confusion.

Yet it was said to them, "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and that sign or wonder come to pass whereof he spake unto thee, saying," (let us do so and so, anything contrary to the laws and statutes of Moses, with which everyone was acquainted), "they should kill him." For the injunction was, "Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams; for the Lord your God proveth you to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul." (Deut. xiii., 1, 5, and 9.) From these passages it is evident that a *false* prophet might have as real a

spiritual ministration to him as a *true* one, as in the case of Balaam: *but a criterion had been given* by which he could be known; and that was, "To the law and to the testimony; if they" (the spirits) "speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." (Is. viii., 19, 20.)

And when they were desired to seek unto them that had "familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter," this was their answer: "*Should not a people seek unto their God," in the order of his appointment?* "for there were false prophets among the people" (2 Pet. ii., 1), who taught them to go after and serve other gods and forsake the true God, and who had access to spirits that were not within or under Divine influence.

And although God raised up a succession of prophets, whose revelations were in full accordance with the established principles of the law, and who proved the truth of their missions by the godliness of their requirements and the fulfilment of their predictions, yet such was the influence of the *false* prophets, and their spurious revelations, upon the people, that ofttimes they refused to hearken to and obey the *true* messengers of God, whose revelations were invariably crossing to their natural and corrupt propensities.

Witness the numerous prophets of Baal, and the false prophets, Hananiah, Ahab, Zedekiah, and Shemaiah, and the judgments which followed them. (See 1 Kings xviii. and xxii., and Jer. xxviii. and xxxix.)

SUMMARY.

The revelations of this Era were designed to effect two objects.

First: To *re*-reveal the laws of the First Era, which had been broken and were lost; and,

Secondly: To foreshadow, by types and figures, the laws of the Third Era.

Thus the confessions to the priests, exclusion from the camp, washings, &c., consequent upon all generative works, were, for the time being, effectual restraints under the law of Moses.

And circumcision was the sign that *generation itself* would, in the next Era, be cut off by Christ the Messiah.

And the Jews learned that, even under the cloak and sanction of *marriage*, they could not cohabit, though simply to procreate, without committing sin at the same time. For a sin-offering was required for the very *act* and *fact* of begetting and bringing forth a child.

"Christ was the end of the law," by fulfilling it; for it was made for those who break, *not* those who *keep* it: and he could not keep—fulfil—it without refraining from the work of generation.

The Law pointed out the sins that Christ would *save his people from.*

The laws, statutes, and judgments were recorded on parchment or stone, and taught to *all* the people.

These were the Tests of Revelation in that Era, and were in every man's possession.

Any "dreamer of dreams," or prophet, whose teachings and requirements conflicted with them, was, by all the people, judged, condemned, and "killed."

The whole nation was to seek unto God in the order of his appointment, *i.e.*, from "between the cherubims"—two golden images of male and female. These were the mediums of all Divine spiritual manifestations to Israel. All other mediums must be in subjection to and in union with them.

CHAPTER II.

SHOWING THE CONSEQUENCES OF RECEIVING AND BEING GUIDED BY FALSE REVELATIONS.

THE *false* gods of the heathen were worshipped almost universally by acts of sensuality, in some form or other; *this was the true reason of the continual tendency of the Israelites to idolatry.*

It was not the dumb idol, nor the stupid and foolish teachings of the idol-priests, that thus attracted them, but the *worship*, that allowed and encouraged a full gratification of their sensual appetites.

The following, which is extracted from David Benedict's "History of all Religions," is a brief statement of some of the abominable indecencies and impurities connected with Pagan mythology:—

"There is scarce a deity (idol), male or female, in ancient Pagan mythology, whose history does not disclose something lascivious and impure; and among the Hindoo gods we are continually presented with debaucheries and crimes. So shockingly obscene and impure is their worship, that Gopula, a pundit employed in the Serampore printing office, a very respectable man among the Hindoos, declared that a man of character was often ashamed of being present, and that if ever he remained, he concealed himself in a corner of the temple. He added, that a song was scarcely tolerated which did not contain the most marked allusions to unchastity; while those which were so abominable that no person could repeat them out of the temple, received the loudest plaudits. All this was done in the very face of the idol.

"There is another feature in this system of idolatry which increases its pernicious effects on the public manners: the wars, quarrels, and licentious intrigues of their gods are all held up, in images, recitations, songs, and dances, at the public festivals.

"'In 1806 (says Ward, in his "Views," &c.), I was present at the worship of the goddess Doorga, as performed in the house of Rajah Chrishnu, at Calcutta.' After describing the greatness of the assembly and profusion of the offerings, and the many strange peculiarities of their worship, he observes: 'The whole produced on my mind sensations of the greatest horror. The dress of the singers; their indecent gestures; the abominable nature of their songs; the horrid din of their miserable drum; the lateness of the hour; the darkness of the place; with the reflection that I was standing in an idol temple; and that this

immense multitude of rational and immortal creatures, capable of superior joys, were, in the very act of worship, perpetrating a crime of high treason against the God of Heaven, while they themselves believed they were performing an act of merit, excited ideas and feelings in my mind which time can never obliterate.'

"'I should have given, in this place, a specimen of their songs sung before the images, but found them so full of broad obscenity that I could not copy a single line. All those actions which a sense of decency keeps out of the most indecent English songs are here detailed, sung, and laughed at, without the least sense of shame. A poor ballad singer in England would be sent to the house of correction, and flogged, for performing the *meritorious actions* of these wretched idolaters!'

"The reader will recollect that the festivals of Bacchus and Cybèle were equally noted for the indecencies practised by their worshippers, both in words and actions.

"The Hindoo Brahmins have contrived to unite *balls* and *theatres* and *sacraments* in the service of their gods; so that the gay and giddy, the thoughtless and profane, find in their temples gratification and enjoyment.

"The lingum worship seems the climax of depravity and abasement, in this system. The lingum is an image of Shiva, in the form of a sugar-loaf, with a projection at the base, like the mouth of a spoon. An account of the origin of this worship, even when refined as much as possible, is too gross to meet the public eye; yet the daily number of the worshippers of this scandalous image (even among the Hindoo women) is far greater than the worshippers of all the other gods put together.

"Well might Buchanan say, 'The peculiar attributes of heathenism are obscenity and blood.'

"If the whole world, as known to us, were divided into thirty-two parts, not less than nineteen of these parts are still inhabited by Pagans and idolaters." (See "History of all Religions," by David Benedict—pages 24 to 26.)

They were "drawn away of their own lusts and enticed," as witness Aaron's having made a golden calf when Moses delayed his return from the Mount. "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play" (*original, to commit fornication*). (Exodus xxxii., 6; and see Adam Clarke.)

The same things are practised to this day in Abyssinia and other heathen countries as common occurrences. (See Bruce's and Ward's Travels.)

Balaam caused Israel to sin after the same manner, by introducing the daughters of Midian into the camp of Israel. (Num. xxv., 6; and xxxi., 16.

Thus the people often went after false gods, and became corrupted with all manner of abominations, until they brought destruction upon themselves, which carried off thousands of them at a time (see Num. xxv., 6, 9; and 1 Cor. x., 8); for God said unto them, "You of all the people of the earth have I known; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." (Amos iii., 2.) *The violation of the law, in the abuse of the functions of reproduction, as it was the first, so has it ever been, and is now, the most universally seducing and besetting sin of the human race.*

God is a God of order, and not of such confusion as has been the result of man's seeking *gratification by corrupting the fountain of his existence.*

Therefore Moses pronounced the following curses upon the Israelites, which should result as a consequence of their disobedience to the rudimental and focal law of their Dispensation :—

"The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly, because of the wickedness of thy doings.

"The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart; and the heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron.

"The Lord shall make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses. He will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee. Also every sickness and every plague which is not written in the book of this law, them will the Lord bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed.

"And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among all nations." (Deut. xxviii.)

These are the terrible consequences of forsaking God, transgressing the laws of Moses, changing the ordinances, and breaking the "*everlasting covenant.*" And how literally and perfectly these threatened curses and judgments have been executed and fulfilled, the past history and present condition of the Jewish nation and people furnish irrefragable evidence.

SUMMARY.

Divine revelation always taught fallen man *self-denial*, and tended towards perfect purity, justice, and love.

But the false revelations of the heathen led them to worship their gods by acts of sensuality and self-indulgence. Idol worship is devil or demon worship. (1 Cor. x., 20.)

This was the true cause of the dereliction of Israel from their own religion to idolatry.

All revelations from evil spirits—false religions—terminate in the violation of the law, and the abuse of the functions of reproduction. As this was the first, so is it the most bewitching, deceptive, and universally besetting sin of the human race.

The destruction of Jerusalem, and the scattering of the Jews over all the face of the earth, resulted from their hearkening to, and obeying the insinuations of, wicked ministering spirits.

All physical diseases are the results of violated natural laws in agriculture and diet.

SECTION III.

CHAPTER I.

THE LAW OF CHRIST, CONTAINING THE RULES OF THE FIRST CHRISTIAN ERA.

THE most general influx of demons or disorderly spirits, in every Dispensation, was always at the latter end of it.

Thus, at the time of Christ's first appearing, an almost universal state of communion between the visible and invisible worlds existed; so that it was quite common in Judea for individuals to be obcessed, and even possessed with spirits, both good and bad.*

In reading the New Testament, one cannot but be struck with the frequency and familiarity with which spirits and spiritual things are spoken of. It appears that, for anyone to be possessed of spirits, improperly called *devils*,† was as common an occurrence in those days as in our days it is for a person to have a fever: from which it is evident that the evil predominated. Hence, it became an important part of Christ's mission to close the door of that Dispensation, by casting out such spirits, and prohibiting their return. This power he not only exercised himself, but he also delegated the same to his disciples. (Mark xvi., 17.)

All spirits, in every Dispensation, should be subject to the established order of God—that is, to the true Church of that Dispensation.

In each Dispensation there was an increasing development of the eternal principles of *truth*, produced by greater displays of the Divine Spirit and Power; and also, a further manifestation of purity, justice, and holiness, in the character of its recipients: each one not only confirming the truth of the reve-

* See Lightfoot. † H. W. Beecher.

lation of its predecessor; but also preparing the way for, and becoming a stepping stone to, its *successor*. (Matt. v., 17—20.)

It was *Jesus* who *closed* the door to the *Second*, and *opened* the door to the *Third* Dispensation, in which the spiritual influx far exceeded what had yet been upon earth. Good spirits had the lead and ascendancy for a season: the dead were raised to life; the blind were restored to sight; the sick were healed; the lepers were cleansed; and, better than all, the poor had the Gospel preached to them (see Matt. xi., 4, 5): and finally, so great was the outpouring of the spiritual elements, that many really began to love one another in deed and in truth; and this love they exhibited by selling all they possessed, and forming a united interest in temporal things (see Acts ii., 44, 45). Thus REVELATION WAS THE FOUNDATION, LOVE THE LIFE, AND COMMUNITY OF PROPERTY THE OUTWARD FORM OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THE BEGINNING OF THE THIRD DISPENSATION.

SUMMARY.

All spirits should be in subjection to the scientific and spiritual principles of the Church of their Era or Cycle.

The Mosaic Church fell, and thus lost the power to regulate or cast out evil spirits. Therefore, at the end of the Second Era there was a great influx of spirits in Judea, over whom no one had any control.

Jesus opened the door to the Third Era, by which hosts of better and higher spirits were admitted to earth. It was by their assistance that he and his disciples cast out evil and ignorant spirits; and by their power it was that the blind saw, the lame walked, the dumb spake, the dead were raised, and that "even devils were subject unto them."

Thus, a further Divine revelation was the foundation of the *Third* Era. Love was its soul, or life; and community of property its body, or outward form.

CHAPTER II.

ANTICHRIST.

When Jesus was ushered into the world, the *testimony* that he was the true Messiah—the Divine Teacher sent of God, to reveal His will to man in a far higher order than had yet existed on earth—formed the basis upon which rested the whole superstructure of principles, precepts, and practice of that Dispensation.

As these were inspirations from the Christ Spirit, "who gave him commandment what he should do and what he should speak" (John xii., 49), this system of faith, principles, precepts, and practices, as first exhibited in his own person, and then embodied in the Church, brought forth by the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, sent to guide them into all truth—temporal and spiritual—formed the standard (or rule) by which to judge and "try" all succeeding revelations, as well as the teachings and influence of every spirit, whether in or out of the body, throughout all the ages of that Dispensation, down to the time of Christ's second appearing.

And any spirit, or angel, or man that taught or teaches any other gospel, or principle, or practice than what had its foundation in that Church, was and is *antichrist.* (See Gal. i., 8.) John says, "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists." (1 John ii., 18.) "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Christ is come in the flesh." (2 John i., 7.) He also exhorted his brethren to "Believe not every spirit; but try the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false spirits are gone out into the world." (1 John iv., 1.) Thus, every spirit must be judged and tried by the standard and rules appropriate to each particular Era.

All who confessed, by a life conformable thereto, that Christ had come into the world through the man Jesus, and that he taught the true principles of godliness for the salvation of men, were of God. But those who denied this, in word or works, were "deceivers and antichrist."

Christ declared himself to be "the way, the truth, and the life," and said, "No man cometh to the Father but by me." (John xiv., 6.) Therefore Christ—*i.e.*, his actual life and doctrines, are the only infallible rule—the straight edge—by which the crooks and turns of all and every spirit, in or out of the body, may be discovered. All in the primitive Church who walked by this rule were blessed and protected of God: and if it cost them their lives, "white robes were given them" as the reward of their faithfulness.

Not many, however, could endure the cross necessary to walk by this rule, and to obey the spirits that testified of these principles of true godliness; but, after running well for a season, they listened to the *false* spirits that were "gone out into the world," and, through false teachers (whom Peter and other of the Apostles foretold would arise), had been led to believe that they could be saved by a *profession*, without actually living out the pure and self-denying principles of the Gospel which Jesus had declared.

This being agreeable to their corrupt propensities, they followed those false spirits and their revelations, and rejected the *true*. And, in a short time, to rid themselves of annoyance by those teachers who brought forth true revelations, enforcing Jesus as an example, and faithfully preaching his word of self-denying power and life, the ecclesiastical councils under the great antichrist *Constantine* decreed that all revelations ceased with the Apostles; and that thenceforth they must depend solely upon the *letter*, which, Paul said, "*killeth*;" and which did accordingly kill the Christ Spirit in them, and "afresh crucify and put him to open shame" before all the heathen nations of earth for the last thirteen or fourteen centuries.

SUMMARY.

It was the faith of Jesus and his followers, "not to believe every spirit, but to try the spirits."

The grand test by which to try them was, that they should believe and confess that "*Christ* had come in the flesh," or in Jesus of Nazareth and in his true disciples. Every spirit that could stand this test was of God. But every spirit that denied this truth, either did not know, and therefore was ignorant; or did know it, but was false. *All such spirits were antichrist.*

The principles, doctrines, precepts, practice, and actual life of Christ Jesus, together with the principles and laws (or tests) of the two preceding Eras, formed the *infallible criterion and test* of all doctrines, creeds, and religious systems, whether purporting to come through spiritual communications, or emanating from councils and ecclesiastical bodies.

When the first Christian Church, or Church of the Third Era, fell, and the antichristian kingdom of the Beast was fully set up under Constantine, then every great principle, doctrine, and test of the First Two Eras was entirely abrogated, denied, and denounced by the NICENE and other subsequent councils.

They first destroyed the foundation of the Church by voting and decreeing that revelation had ceased, and that the canon of Scripture was closed, and then they decided that thereafter nothing but the "letter" (*bible*), that "killeth," should remain as "the rule and guide of faith and practice" to Christendom. And thenceforth "they would no more endure sound" *spiritual* "doctrine."

Thus the Church was cut off from all Divine communication, and was prepared to enter upon a course and to enact scenes of persecution and bloodshed against all who should not conform to its orthodoxy.

The "*man of sin*" was now in the temple of God, or Church, or people. Concupiscence, or the *lust of the flesh*, is the "man

of sin," that sitteth in the heart of every professor of Christianity in all the various sects and denominations of the so-called Christian world; and is the "*abomination of desolation*" that occupies the heart of each individual heathen and every heathen temple.

Christ had gone, to be (and was) absent for more than twelve hundred and sixty years. And thus is seen how complete and consummate was the falling away of the first Christian Church (even by the time of the Emperor Constantine), which was certain to precede the second appearing of Christ at the end of the prophetic period.

The civil government destroyed the Pentecostal Church organisation.

CHAPTER III.

SUBJECT CONTINUED.

From this time, they would no more "endure sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, began to heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts" (2 Tim. iv., 3), by establishing theological institutions, to qualify, by a vain and false philosophy, carnal young men to interpret the Scriptures by human wisdom, in a way pleasing to the basest passions of man's fallen nature; and both Catholic and Protestant entirely doing away and making the cross of Christ of no effect by their traditions, creeds, and dogmas, and by their comments and commentaries on Holy Writ.

And, inasmuch as the great body of professed Christians followed the "pernicious ways" of those "false prophets and teachers" to whom Peter alludes (2 Peter ii., 1, 2), the Church lost the true spirit of revelation, and cut itself off from all communion with Christ its Head, by rejecting the ministrations of all those spirits who were sent forth to "minister," individually and collectively, to all them who should be called to be the "heirs of salvation." (Heb. i., 14.)

Thus was consummated the "*falling away*," spoken of by the Apostle, that should certainly precede the second coming of Christ, in which should be revealed "*the man of sin*, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the *temple* of *God*, showing himself that he is God." (2 Thes. ii., 3, 4.) "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God? and if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." (1 Cor. iii., 16, 17.) "Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit." (*Ib.* vi., 19.)

Therefore, as man individually, and the Church collectively, under the Gospel, is that temple, it is thus incontrovertibly proved that the "man of sin" is something in the *very heart* of the professors of Christianity that *they* highly esteem "above God," although it "is an abomination in his sight."

And, notwithstanding that such persons may "justify themselves before men, God knoweth their hearts'" lust. (Luke xvi., 15.) "For the bed is shorter than a man can stretch himself on, and the covering narrower than he can wrap himself in" (Is. xxviii., 20) and hide from the All-seeing Eye. "For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord" (Jer. ii., 22), "neither is thine iniquity hid from my eyes." (*Ib.* xvi., 17.)

It is therefore as plain as the sun at noonday, that concupiscence, or the *lust of the flesh*, is the god—"the man of sin"—which all Christendom has bowed down to and worshipped, in preference to worshipping the true and living God of purity. And this, too, is the same influence, or power, or goddess of lust—*Venus*—that is and always has been so potent in the heathen temples, whose worship ofttimes attracted the figurative Israel, to their shame, confusion, and final destruction.

This was also alluded to by Jesus in his parable of a king going to a far country, and returning again, and finding his kingdom in the hands of his enemies, who, in the interim, had

killed his son, and then given themselves up to a riotous, self-indulging life, until the king suddenly returned, and executed upon them a work of judgment. (See Luke xix., 12—27.) Also the prophecies of Daniel and of John, both of whom not only agree in the great event of supplanting the Church of Christ by an opposite power, under different names and symbols, as "a beast that made war with the saints, and overcame them"—"the abomination of desolation standing where it ought not"—the whore of Babylon, which would reign over the kings of the earth," &c., &c.; but they also agree that the time or duration of the reign of this antichristian power—in which there would be no true Church of Christ upon earth—would be 1260 years. At the expiration of which period, the sanctuary, or temple, or Church, "should be" progressively "cleansed, and an end made of sin, and everlasting righteousness brought in;" or, in other words, Christ, who had been all that period absent, would "make his second appearance" on earth "to those who look for him, without sin unto salvation." (Heb. ix., 23.)

SUMMARY.

After antichrist had gained the ascendancy, men would "no longer endure sound doctrine," and "the cross of Christ was made of none effect" by the commentaries of doctors of divinity, who derived their authority from hierarchical councils and ecclesiastical institutions, by which revelation was denied and denounced, and *sin* declared to be the necessary and inevitable concomitant of Christianity; to eradicate which, the Church possessed no power.

Thus the Church cut itself off from a living communion with the spirit-world, and thereby consummated the "falling away;" and thenceforth the "man of sin" sat in the temple or Church of God. And, as the people was that Church, or temple, it was in the heart of each individual thereof that the "man of sin" sat enthroned.

This "man of sin" is represented under different appella-

tions by Daniel and John, viz.: "the beast," "the image of the beast," "the whore of Babylon," "the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth," &c.; as a power that would rule the nations until Christ should make his second appearance in them to "destroy it with the Spirit of his mouth, and consume it with the brightness of his appearing."

SECTION IV.

CHAPTER I.

THE DIVINE LAWS OF CHRIST, AS DEFINITIVE RULES OF JUDGMENT, PERFECTED IN THE SECOND CHRISTIAN ERA, OR FOURTH AND LAST DISPENSATION.

"As the times of the Highest have plain beginnings in wonders and powerful works, and ending in effect and signs" (2 Esdras ix., 6), so, at the close of the Third Dispensation, Jesus informs us there would be a general rush of spirits—both true and false, and good and bad—upon earth; and that near the close of the First Christian Era, and about the time of his *second coming*, or the opening of the Fourth and last Dispensation or Era, "many false Christs and false prophets would arise, who would show great signs and wonders, insomuch, that if it were possible they would deceive even the very elect" (Matt. xxiv., 24); that is, they would draw them away from those purifying principles which constituted the foundation of his first Church, and upon which also would be built the Church of his second coming.

Consequently, however high might be the professions, or marvellous the wonders and signs of these false Christians, to *those* who would hearken to the good and the true spirits—the ministers of the shining light that would be the harbinger (see Mal. iii., 1) of Christ's second appearing—the *warning word* is, "*Believe them not*"—"*Go not after them.*" (Matt. xxiv., 23; and Luke xvii., 23.) "By their fruits ye shall know them, for every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." (Matt. vii., 17, 18, 20.)

Again, the Revelator says, "And the sixth angel poured out

his vial, and I saw three unclean spirits, like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. They are the spirits of devils working *miracles*, which go forth unto the kings" (or leading minds) "of the earth, and to the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." (Rev. xvi., 12—14.)

This will be the last tremendous struggle between the powers of antichrist and all other corrupt powers of the world, and those powers or principles that are preparing the way for, and will have a place in, the kingdom of God upon earth, in which a final separation between the elements of good and evil, and between true and false revelation proceeding from these two sources, will be effected.

And is it not manifest that in our day there is an unexampled influx of spirits from the spirit-world to earth? evidently betokening that it is the end of the Third Dispensation and the beginning of the Fourth: and that a condition of things precisely similar to what existed at the close of the Second Dispensation, when Christ made his first appearing, is the order (or rather *dis*order) of the day.

When men or women, in any age, invited the presence and familiarities of spirits, and tampered with them for worldly gain or from sinister motives, and out of the *Church's order*, they were liable to be obsessed; and it often happened that thus the spirits gained possession of persons who could not disengage themselves from them.

And as the Church of each Dispensation, while standing in its true order, possessed the power to cast out these spirits, and thereby release such souls, it followed that by this power or test the true Church of each Era could be known.

The heathen and false religionists attracted spirits by their sorceries and incantations, but had no power to expel them. The superior alone could govern the inferior.

There was a class of persons in the Jewish Church, called *exorcists*, whose profession was to cast out spirits. Adam

Clarke says, "They were termed *Masters of the Name*—that is, the name of *Jehovah*, by a certain pronunciation of which they believed the most wonderful miracles could be wrought. And when they could not deny the miracles of our Lord, they attributed them to his knowledge of the true pronunciation of this most sacred name."

When the Jewish Church lost its Divine character, these also lost the power of exorcism.

This power was again revealed in, and possessed by, the first Christian Church. The same author says:—

"*Exorcisms*, or *adjurations* of evil spirits, were frequent in the primitive Church; the name of Jesus was that alone which was used. The primitive fathers speak strong and decisive words concerning the power of this *name;* and how demons were tormented, and expelled by it, not only from individuals, but from the temples themselves. Exorcists formed a distinct class in the Church; hence we read of Presbyters, Deacons, Exorcists, Lectors, and Door-keepers." (Comment. Acts xix., 14 and 17.)

When "certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth—

"There were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?

"And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house, naked and wounded.

"And this was known to all the Jews, and Greeks also, dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all; and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

"*And many that believed came and confessed, and showed their deeds.* Many also of them which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men; and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver." (Acts xix., 13—19.)

Thus it appears that the power of casting out spirits had departed from the Jewish Church, and had passed over to, and rested upon, the Church of the Third Era.

And the people were convinced that that which had been glorious in its day "was no longer glorious, by reason of the glory which excelleth."

It is by no means improbable that again, in the progress of the work of the present spiritual manifestations, men and women will become obsessed by spirits from whom they will not be able to free themselves. And should that be the case, it is very certain that neither Catholic nor Protestant Churches possess the power to cast out such spirits or demons.

Of the world-renowned physical demonstrations at the house of Dr. Phelps, in Stratford, Conn., the author was himself an eye-witness, having been one of a committee of Shakers that proved to be the medium through whom a superior class of spirits "cast out" the former mischievous and destructive spirits of which the boy Henry was the medium.

Dr. Phelps informed the author that previous to the arrival of the Shakers' committee, the retired clergymen, who, with their families, composed the population of Stratford, had held a meeting, having the boy Henry present, for the purpose of exorcising the spirits.

The result was, that when they were assembled, with prayer, each with a Bible on his lap as a talisman, the Bible—Word of God, as they term it—of one priest flew across the room, and hit another priest on the head; and then another, and another, until the meeting was broken up in confusion; leaving the boy, his father, and the spirits in possession of the field of battle.

This was a type of Babylon—Christendom—and of what will occur therein through the instrumentality of Spiritualism and Shakerism. There will be "battles of shaking."

After the above occurrence, while a company of Shaker brethren and sisters were visiting at Dr. Phelps's house, the following incident took place. Jane Knight, while in the sitting room on a Sabbath morning, thought to herself that she

would like to have a Bible to read; immediately one dropped at her feet. Upon opening it, she found the print rather small, and wished that as the spirits were so kind, they had given her one with larger type: directly, another Bible dropped gently into her lap, which, upon opening, she found to be just right.

Therefore, if the power to cast out spirits be needed, it must be sought, not in the mere record of bygone Divine revelation, but in the Church of the Fourth Era, which originated in, is based upon, and stands by, the power of Divine revelation itself.

SUMMARY.

As each Dispensation possessed a Church which rested upon Divine revelation, and was the only proper avenue to the spirit-world; and also possessed the power to regulate all other revelations—when such Church fell from its union with God, then no power remained upon earth to keep the "principalities and powers" (Eph. vi., 12) of the spirit-world in order; consequently, all became confusion, and the whole race of man rapidly progressed towards utter destruction.

Therefore, when the Mosaic Church had become corrupted, we see Saul, its head, "seeking unto witches" (whom it was his duty to have destroyed), because *he* could obtain no response "from between the cherubims." Evil spirits had obtained possession of the earth, Church and all.

In the end of the Second Era, the destruction of Jerusalem corresponded to the flood at the end of the *First*.

The Lord said, "You, of all the nations of the earth, have I known. I will therefore punish you for all your iniquities." Other nations, born in ignorance of the laws of their creation, were not so wicked, though equally lost, as were the antediluvians and the Jews, unto whom these laws had been made "known" by revelation.

Jesus, by casting out evil spirits before they had obtained entire possession and control, saved many individuals from death. But when the spirits entered into the *swine*, their

union was so complete that death inevitably ensued: for it is the nature of *evil* to destroy life, as it is of good to preserve it.

And unless there be some *good in a man*, an evil spirit cannot be cast out of him.

There is no contradiction in the truth—*God*.

Jesus came not to destroy or change any law, or rule, or test of revelation that belonged to any previous Era, but to add thereto his own life and doctrines. For not only did each Era retain all the righteous principles of the previous ones, but *itself* possessed more laws, rules, and tests than they did.

Thus the tests accumulate in each succeeding Dispensation: and, of consequence, the spirituality of the work of God increases.

Jesus predicted that, at the end of the Third Era, there would arise many false Christs and false prophets, who would show great signs and wonders.

And John said that three unclean spirits like frogs (amphibious: that is, they would mix up the earthly order of generation and the spiritual order of regeneration together—land and water) would go forth to the kings of the earth and all the powers of the world, and would gather them together to the great battle between these two orders—the earthly and spiritual: and then would come the final trial and struggle between good and evil, and between true and false revelation. Then would be the greatest spirit-manifestation the earth ever witnessed. (See Rev. xvi., 13 to end.)

This has now commenced, and, as before remarked, is the order, or rather *dis*order, of the day.

Consequently, there never was a time when an unerring rule or test of revelation was so imperatively demanded, or so essential to man, as the present.

For many sincere, honest-minded persons are bewildered and confounded by the innumerable spiritual phenomena that surround them: of which their Churches or spiritual guides can give no explication.

CHAPTER II.

ALL NATIONS BLESSED THROUGH THE CHURCH OF THEIR ERA.

Now, although between the destruction of the first Gospel temple, or Church, and the rebuilding of the second Gospel temple, or Church (of which the two temples of Solomon and Zerubbabel were striking figures), there was evidently no place for a true Christian Church; yet Revelation, notwithstanding it was denied and rejected by the false Church, was *not entirely* driven from the earth. "The spirits of the heavens" (Zach. vi., 5) caused the "two witnesses," in a suffering state, to prophesy of the Church which had been, and of the Church which was to come; *nothing more*, except to testify against that which then existed as antichrist. And however bright and shining might have been the light in which they rejoiced, it could only be for a season, for there was no basis for them to build upon, neither would any Government composed of Church and State have permitted such organisation, the foundations of the first Gospel temple having been razed, and those of the second not being yet laid. Therefore, "if the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Ps. xi., 3.)

And in this day, any sect or body of people, however much of the Spirit and truth they may possess, who are not prepared to claim that they are in the Fourth and last Dispensation, and that Christ has made his second appearing in them, must needs be content with the character of "witnesses," who pray for the kingdom of God "to come." And all such may rest assured that something better awaits them in the future than anything yet in their possession; for every degree of goodness and truth in any people is of God, and leads towards Him.

Revelation is the "rock" upon which the true Church of Christ is built. And this Church is the most direct emanation from God that has yet been upon earth. It is the "kingdom" which the God of heaven has "set up" (see Dan. ii., 44, and

vii., 27), and which will finally supplant all human systems, "not" indeed "by might or power" (*carnal* weapons), but by "God's Spirit." In it, "righteousness and peace have met together, and mercy and truth have kissed each other" (Ps. lxxxv., 10); and from it goes forth the law of the inherent rights of man to all parts of the world; and the living Word of the Lord from thence is the Angel that is enlightening the earth. (See Rev. xiv., 6.)

This, "the new creation," is the most beautiful and perfect system of principles and order, in both temporal and spiritual things, that has been witnessed by man since the world began. A *new earthly order*, for the supply of his physical wants; and a *new spiritual order*, for the satisfying of his spiritual nature—a *Millennium*. Therefore, it is a system of which the natural creation, with all its laws and principles, and its immutable and unchangeable order, is the most direct and perfect type.

And although, as has been observed, the Church originated from, is based upon, and sustained by, Divine revelation, in a much higher sense than was the Mosaica one; yet, like it, there are certain *first* principles in it which are clearly understood by every individual member of the body, "from the greatest of them even unto the least," as was promised of the Lord, when he said He would "make a *new covenant* with the house of Israel: not according to the old covenant" (which he made with the natural man, in the earthly order of the first Adam, and renewed under the Mosaic economy, respecting the work of *procreation*), "which my covenant they brake, saith the Lord. For I will put my law into their *inward* parts and write it in their *hearts;* and will be their God, and they shall be my people. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jer. xxxi., 31—34.)

And "if there should arise a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams," who should show signs and wonders, which should even come to pass, or one that should have visions, or revelations, which tend to cause any soul to violate the least of these well-known principles; *then*, although it should be the

highest member of the body, spiritual death and separation would be the inevitable consequence. For the true "elect" cannot be deceived by either evil or seducing spirits, because they are the children of Revelation, and are familiar with spirits and "*spiritual manifestations*," in all their forms.

How, then, can dark, ignorant, or evil spirits deceive those who are always accompanied by angels of light, and by the spirits of those who, while on earth, were made perfect by the cross of Christ? (See Heb. xii., 22, 23.) Herein is seen the fulfilment of the ancient prophecy: "And Saviours shall come up on Mount Zion, to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the Lord's." (Obad. 21.) It is thus that "judgment shall be given to the saints of the Most High;" and that "the saints shall judge the world;" yea, and "judge *angels*" in the generative heavens—that is, every spirit that speaks to or through man. (See Dan. vii., 22; and 1 Cor. vi., 2, 3.)

And herein is the oracle of the "Urim and Thummim" restored in its true spiritual order, by which judgment can be rendered in righteousness and truth.

But no individual can possess this, except he be in union with the Church of the living God, as established in this "latter day of glory."

SUMMARY.

There had been two Jewish temples prefiguring the two Christian Churches. And as both the temples were destroyed, so was the first Christian Church, to which properly belonged the power to open and shut heaven—the spirit-world.

That power continued partially to rest upon the "two witnesses," who existed (and could *only prophesy*) between the destruction of the first and the establishment of the second Christian temple.

These witnesses could and did torment with the truth the subjects of the beast, but could *not build;* for the beast—Church and State—reigned, and he destroyed whatever (and as fast as) they built. And therefore, the foundations being destroyed, even the righteous witnesses could not do anything

besides deliver their testimony and suffer martyrdom; or be overcome by the beast or his image, and thus lose their spiritual life.

But now that the second Christian temple is being built, the foundations of which are firmly laid in the power and wisdom of God, the witnesses have all become *dead bodies*, and constitute the "image of the beast"—Protestant sects—and a general influx from the spirit-world has begun upon earth, with neither Church nor even witnesses to regulate it.

And there will yet be such a time of trouble to the *generative* man as has never been upon earth before. (Mat. xxiv., 21.)

And finally, men will learn that the *Church of the Second Appearing of Christ is the* TRUE *Church of the Fourth Era*, to which rightfully and exclusively pertains the ordering and regulating all spiritual powers and beings.

For in and through that Church, if at all, every nation of the earth will be blest; for "the law will go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem," to all people, according to the figure of the natural Israel.

CHAPTER III.

URIM AND THUMMIM.

JESUS CHRIST testified, "I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil it"—that is, the spirit and righteous principles of the law; and to advance them to far higher degrees of perfection, by a fuller display of Divine revelations and power. Thus also, in this Dispensation, his Divine Spirit embraces all the righteous principles of the three former Eras: and, by increasing the inspired revelations, and giving a superior flow of Divine light and power, he carries them out in their perfected order; thus completing the foundation and work which God began in him in his first appearing. (See Eph. ii., 20.)

The *leading* principle of this foundation is—"Christ *has* appeared the second time, without sin, unto salvation;" and the *seal of judgment* is—"the Lord knoweth them that are his," and "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ *depart from all iniquity.*" (2 Tim. ii., 19.) All professed revelation or inspiration, whatever its source, must be judged by this rule. And any revelation that sanctions the *violation of the law of nature*, as already set forth, is not of God, but is from false or ignorant spirits, who are still in the lost and benighted elements of the world.

For it is the breach of this law that produces those "fleshly *lusts* which war against the soul" (1 Pet. ii., 11); which *lusts* led to the destruction of the old world, and to the overthrow of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and lie at the bottom of all the abominations of the heathen nations. It was a "generation who had eyes full of *adultery*, and that could not cease from sin" (2 Pet. ii., 14), that "killed the Prince of life." (Acts iii., 15.) And from this foul source, according to the Apostle James (iv., 1), "proceed all wars and fightings," private and public.

This it was that caused the fall of the primitive Church, as is evident from the reproofs given by the Spirit to the "seven Churches in Asia" (see Rev. ii. and iii.); and *this* it is which, ever since that event, has been, day and night, *accusing* the servants of God before Him. (See Rev. xii., 10.) And how frequently it brings even the professed "ministers of Christ" in the kingdom of the beast into public disgrace, let the daily prints declare. Therefore, any person bringing forth a revelation teaching that a *true Christian* can still follow the first Adam in the work of generation, is either deceived or is a deceiver; as also is he who teaches that he can indulge in ambition, pride, or the vain glory of the world.

For in the Church of Christ there is a revelation of meekness, humility, and of mortification to the proud and lofty nature of man; also to the self-exalting principles of a false *philosophy*, which no doubt is often derived from a class of

spirits in the lower spheres of the spiritual world, who have never found a relation to the true resurrection work of God: but are some of "the dead," who have not yet believed in Christ, nor have ever heard "the voice of the Son of God." "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves" (in the spirit-world) "shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done" and continue to do "good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done" and continue to do "evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." (John v., 28, 29.) Thus showing that the probationary state extends into the world of spirits.

Therefore, when Jesus was "put to death in the flesh, he was quickened by the Spirit; by which also he went and preached to the spirits in prison who were disobedient to Noah's righteous preaching." (1 Pet. iii., 18, 19.) From which fact it appears that the wicked antediluvians, "every imagination of whose heart was only evil," and who had been tormented for centuries by their own ungodly lusts and wicked passions raging within and among them "like unquenchable fires," were yet in a *salvable* condition; as it is certain that our Saviour would not have preached to them had it not been possible for them to obey his preaching.

As saith Isaiah (chap. ix., 2), "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of *death*, upon them hath the light shined." And "for this cause was the Gospel preached also to them that are *dead*, that they might be judged according to" (or in the same manner as) "men in the flesh," but "live according to God in the spirit" (1 Pet. iv., 6); *that was the object.*

But what ministers of *error* and *evil* such lost, degraded spirits can be to those who are accessible to them, it is needless to expatiate upon. Who is it that is not in danger of being led astray by some of them? None but the "*elect*" are safe, who, "lest" even "*they* enter into temptation," must "watch and pray," to "make their calling and election sure." (2 Pet. i., 10.)

For the false philosophy emanating from these boasting spirits

is "after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col. ii., 8), which philosophy leads souls into a labyrinth of darkness; and, under the sanction of a pretended Divine inspiration, teaches that there is no *evil* spirit, nor *evil* of *any kind*, except such as has been created by God and man; and that after death all will be immediately happy, without any reference to, or being made partakers of, a work of true repentance (which leads souls to confess and forsake all sin); without suffering with Jesus, and dying to a sinful nature, as he died to it; and without finding salvation as *the effects of their own true travail of soul:* forgetting that "into the holy city nothing can enter which worketh abomination, or that loveth or maketh a lie." (Rev. xxi., 27.)

The doctrine that "*there is no evil*" entirely abrogates the teaching of Jesus Christ, which was exemplified by his life, sufferings, and *violent death*, and which showed that *both good and evil had a veritable eternal existence;* and that, as the elements of good concentrate in and proceed from an absolutely good Being, so do the elements of evil concentrate in and proceed from a being absolutely evil. And it was equally impossible for the good Being to create or originate (directly or indirectly) an antagonistic being or element, as it was for that antagonistic being or element to create the Author and element of all good. For the same fountain can *not* send forth sweet water and bitter. And Jesus affirmed that "men do not gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles," for the simple, though cogent, reason that "an evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit, any more than can a good tree bring forth evil fruit." As also in his parable of the earth, which he represents as a field, in which good seed was sowed, but in which tares, or evil seed, was also sowed *by an enemy*. Thus arguing that, if there had been no foreign enemy to God in existence, no such evil seed would or could have been found in the earth; nor, indeed, would the idea of evil, had there been no antitype thereof, ever have entered the human soul.

A writer, recently, in attempting to prove that there is no

such thing as evil in or out of this world, observes, "If we admit the existence of evil at all, we must admit that God is the author of it," and that "what is called evil is comparatively good, or good in its incipient, incompleted, and undeveloped forms." These remarks he grounds upon the fact that mankind can and may progress from bad to better, and so onward.

But if that which does not possess an acrid quality cannot impart or transmit it, so neither can God, who is essential, absolute, and unadulterated good, ever exhibit outwardly, in his creation, that which is opposite to, and has no existence in, Himself—*evil*.

Again, good cannot be evil, nor can evil be good, even in an incipient state; nor can good change to and become evil, or evil change to and become good; any more than darkness can become light, or than light can become darkness. Darkness may give place to light, and evil may be removed and give place to good, but cannot possibly mix therewith. For the principles or elements of good and evil are always *necessarily* distinct and antagonistic, being never in union or assistant of each other, any more than are light and darkness, truth and error, ease and pain, or life and death.

Man having been originally created "very good," if he had *never yielded* to the evil suggestions of a *foreign enemy*, and thus become a subject of moral and spiritual darkness and evil—sin, sorrow, and sickness, sighing and tears, war and slavery, and famine and pestilence, together with all the thousands of secondary sources of human misery, would have been as far from mankind as they ever will be in the consummation of the work of redemption—the *Millennium*.

Many minds, well-intentioned, have conceived the idea that if mankind had been created entirely and positively good, they could not have progressed. Everything in nature testifies against this error; and the unlimited faculties of the human soul especially bear witness to the truthlessness of this position. Good may be good without any mixture of evil, and

yet be eternally expansive and progressive in its nature and growth.

And shall we say, that because good can expand, increase, and continue its augmentations, it therefore is or was incipient evil?

Good is *good* in all the different stages and processes through which it may pass; as is proved by its happifying effects upon all sensuous existences, from the embryo to the highest state of physical, intellectual, and spiritual development. So also is evil *evil* in all the different stages through which *it* may pass; as is evidenced by the pain, suffering, and unhappiness to which all things and persons are subject, in proportion as they are under its influence.

The practical effects of charging upon God the *creation of evil*, or (which is tantamount) disbelieving in and denying the existence thereof, must be to throw souls off their guard in relation to its pernicious influences and wily machinations.

If a disease that is *well known* is thereby *half* cured, then the converse of this proposition is also true; and so dreadful a disease as *evil* being *totally unknown*, and even mistaken for positive *good*, by intelligent souls, must be tenfold more dangerous to them, as free agents, who are really placed between, and subject to, the suggestions and drawings of intelligent agents in both elements—good and evil—than it would be to such as are *fully enlightened* in regard to their *true position*.

It is a question whether the doctrine of *no evil* be not one of the most radically dangerous that has ever been broached to or by the human mind. It certainly is the antipodes of what Jesus and his Apostles taught upon that subject.

Jesus said, "What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation;" and "Except a man deny himself, and take up his cross daily," and even "hate his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." To the Jews he said, "Ye are of your father the devil; and the lusts of your father ye will do." The Apostle exhorts, "Be sober, be vigilant; for your adversary the devil goeth about as a roar-

ing lion, seeking whom he may devour." "To him that *overcometh*," said Jesus Christ, "will I give to eat of the tree of life." These, and many other texts of similar import, possess no sense or meaning at all except upon the assumption that two opposite powers and principles do exist; and that man is not merely a non-progressed being in good, but that he is a *bonâ fide free agent*, standing between, subject to, and continually operated upon, by two antagonistic elements and powers therein—*good and evil*.

It is not possible to conceive of a greater insult being offered to the human understanding than the attempt that is now so sedulously, ingeniously, and extensively being made to convince and satisfy it that all the evil of lying, robbery, murder, and rapine—all the perfidy and oppression—all the gluttony, drunkenness, and lechery—the riches and poverty, the luxury and starvation, and the impiety and ungodliness that the past and present history of mankind unfold, are, and always have been, from a perfectly good source; or that they are merely the result of non-development in good—a necessary state and stage in the process of *progression* Godward; and are therefore the seed—the germinal sources and incipient stages—of peace, purity, righteousness, and love—*true religion*. The logical conclusion of this doctrine of no evil is, that "whatever is is right."

This is really commingling and confounding opposite and contrary qualities and things, if not overturning the foundations of sanity in the human mind.

Good and evil exist abstractly, and also manifestly. There are principles of good and evil; and these are reduced to actions—facts—by intelligent beings. There is the same amount and kind of evidence in proof of the existence of the one that there is by which to prove the existence of the other. Love and hatred, peace and war, forgiveness and revenge, benevolence and cupidity, chastity and lust, &c., &c., have each and all an equally positive and tangible existence. Persons subject to these passions and principles are real entities.

Upon the hypothesis that *either one* of these had a *beginning*, the *other* must have created it out of *nothing;* for it is equally as absurd to suppose that real evil could be made out of real good, as it is to suppose that real good could be made out of real evil.

Also, it is not a whit less illogical to assume that the evil principles and elements do exist, but that there is no unoriginated *evil being* in them, than it would be to suppose that the good principles and elements exist, but that there is no unoriginated *good Being* therein, who directs and controls them.

To attempt to *evade* the absurdity of the proposition that either of these principles or beings created its own opposite out of nothing, by saying they first produced good or evil beings, and that these created their own opposites, is unreasonable and disingenuous.

If evil *be evil*, then it was an *evil thought* and design *in the mind of the Creator—God*—out of which He created it, and first brought it into existence; whether He himself did it directly, or whether He did it by producing another being—man—to do it for Him.

An acorn could just as easily develop itself into an apple tree (if no independent principle and being of evil have any existence) as can man progress or develop himself into a being, the germinal principles of whose character God had not thought of nor planted in him.

Thus "saith the Lord: They have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither *came it into my heart.*" (Jer. vii., 30, 31.) *He never thought of it.*

But upon the hypothesis, or fact, that the principles, elements, and unoriginated beings (good and evil) exist, there is no contradiction, confusion, or absurdity, that necessarily follows. For as "God is of purer *eyes* than to *behold* iniquity," so also is He too pure in *heart* to *think* iniquity.

Just so far as man is in evil, is he actually out of God and Christ. "He that sinneth hath not seen Christ, neither known him." "Then will He say unto them, Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity; I *never knew* you."

God exists only in his own elements. Yet He could create beings with a capacity for receiving evil influences, as easily as a man can make a vessel out of the most pure material, capable of holding the most noisome and poisonous fluids.

It is very problematical whether a being thus "made upright" and "very good" in all his faculties and capacities, who, in the exercise of his free agency, prostitutes them under and to the influences of evil, is not *more unhappy* than one whose very being is *only evil;* of whom a figure is seen in the snake, tiger, hyena, vulture, &c., &c. For misery is the result of a creature getting out of its own—its native—element.

SUMMARY.

The Fourth Era, again, and the Church pertaining to it, like all the preceding ones, had its origin in *Divine Revelation*, and is the second revelation and manifestation of Christ, in the *female* order, as the *first* was in the *male* order.

As *Jesus* was anointed and filled with the Christ-Spirit, *so was* Ann Lee. Neither of them, however, is an object of *worship*, any more than are those who follow them (who are also baptised with the anointing or Christ-Spirit) objects of worship. "Know ye not that, except *Christ be in you" all, "ye are reprobates?"* (See 2 Cor. xiii., 5.)

Thus, in each succeeding Dispensation the revelation is more directly from God: that is, the mediums or messengers thereof sent to earth are of a *higher* order. But in all cases it is a man or woman that receives the revelation from the messenger.

The *First* Era commenced in *Adam;* the *Second* in *Abraham;* the *Third* in *Jesus;* the *Fourth* in *Ann Lee.*

In this Fourth Dispensation is established the final Church and kingdom of Christ, which possesses the "Urim and Thum-

mim;" and therefore it cannot be deceived or overthrown by evil or ignorant spirits; for its communicants are familiar with spirits and spiritual manifestations in all their phases and forms.

This Church has its laws, statutes, and rules, as had the Adamic, Mosaic, and first Christian.

And these laws, with the "*new covenant*" *of regeneration*—virgin purity—are put into the heart of every individual, and form the touchstone or test of all revelation.

The faithful persons, therefore, who compose this Church, are the "very elect," who cannot be deceived.

Thus, all the righteous laws of the Four Dispensations culminate in this Church of the Fourth Era, uniting in a concentration of spiritual light; and form the "Urim and Thummim," which all the dark spirits in existence, on earth or in the spirit-world, cannot either dim or becloud.

The practical fruit of this Church is the entire banishment of poverty and want, and sin and misery; and a full supply of physical and spiritual necessaries for the body and soul of every one of its members.

He who teaches that Christ and generation can coalesce, is deceived, or is a deceiver.

No law of any previous Era must be violated. The Mosaic law was from God; and Jesus said, "Heaven and earth should pass away; but not in any wise should one jot or tittle of the law pass therefrom, until it be all fulfilled," or kept (see Matt. v., 18); *then it will cease and pass away*, for it was made only for sinners, or transgressors. And, therefore, if the professed Christian sin, he must pay the Mosaic penalty; as, in sinning, he breaks or transgresses the law of Moses; for "sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John iii., 4.) Every spirit that denieth this is *false*.

The *lust of generation* is the one great evil that marred all the designs and works of God in the first three Eras. But it is utterly destroyed in the Fourth, by the cutting off of the work of generation itself.

Lust caused the flood. By it the primitive Church fell. It has accused and condemned the "two witnesses," day and night before God, during the last eighteen centuries; and has caused the stars (priests and teachers) of the old heavens (Christendom) to fall to the earth, and wallow in the filth of sexuality. And from it have proceeded all "wars and fightings," Heathen and Christian.

The Gospel, or law of the Fourth Dispensation, will be preached to all peoples, nations, kindreds, and tongues, on earth and in the spirit-world.

Jesus preached it to the antediluvians. (See 1 Pet. iii., 18—20.) But there is a class of spirits who assume *great* names and who speak *great* swelling words of vanity—advocates of a vain and false philosophy—who find many willing proselytes, unto whom they minister, and teach that there are no evil spirits nor any evil, and that after death *all* will be happy; that in the beginning there was nothing but God, and that there will be nothing but God in the end.

But it is hoped that these Tests will prove a sufficient guard, to every soul who will abide by them, against the machinations of all kinds and classes of spirits, and also from all error and false doctrine.

SECTION V.

CHAPTER I.

AFFINITIVE RELATION OF THE DIVINE WORK IN THE FOUR DISPENSATIONS.

1. All the works of God are intimately connected by various degrees of *affinitive relation*, and are arranged in circles or spheres of order, the larger or general circles being drawn round lesser and lesser circles down to the spheres of individuals, which revolve in their respective circles in the progressive development of the providential and divine work of God, like wheels within wheels; and into each circle the Divine and ever-living Spirit is diffused with power and light, to move, guide, and direct all their operations according to the Divine will. For the Eternal Spirit has his throne above upon this order of his workmanship, from whence, by his Divine power and wisdom, He governs and directs the whole, progressively, to fulfil his purposes.

2. And each individual connected with any of these orders of circles has his peculiar sphere of operation, and to each is given an *eye* of light to discern the present degree of the progressive work of God in which he is called to labour.

3. This affinitive connection and progressive movement of the Divine order, in each Dispensation of the providence and grace of God to man, was shown by the visions of the ancient Prophet Ezekiel (see chaps. i. and x.), wherein he saw "four living creatures" *or powers* joined together, which were called *Cherubims*, and over and upon them was the "appearance of the likeness of a throne," and above and upon it was "the likeness of the glory of the God of Israel," from whence came the directing Voice.

4. And their figurative "appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps; and it went up and down amongst these living creatures." These Cherubims evidently represented the Four general Dispensations through which the whole work of God has been, and will be, displayed to man; and here they were shown to be all joined together; for each rose out of the preceding one, until the Fourth and last, in which the whole will be completed, and then all will be perfected and joined in one union, according to the directions of the Almighty Spirit: for "whithersoever the Spirit was to go, they went," and turned not as they went; "they went every one straight forward." This shows that the progress of the orders of God's work is *straight forward* to accomplish his purposes, and turns not to the right nor to the left. Each cherub had four faces of the same appearance; thus showing that they all looked to the connective work of God in each of the Four Dispensations, and were proceeding on in affinitive relation.

5. Their *four faces* were the same as were seen by St. John (Rev. iv., 7) on the four living creatures (improperly rendered "*beasts*") that were "full of eyes, before and behind;" which shows that these represented the same orders, and also that each one was in affinitive relation to the other three; and all their circles were joined in one universal order, for they all moved together. And by each cherub was one wheel; and the work of the wheels was one likeness: and their appearance and their work was, as it were, "a wheel in the midst of a wheel." "When they went, they went up on their four sides; they turned not as they went:" that is, they moved unitedly alike, and turned not to the right nor to the left; but to the place whither the head looked, they followed it. Thus they turned not from their straight course after the living creatures; "for the spirit of the living creatures," or powers, "was in them."

6. These wheels represented the body of people who were chosen in the covenant relation of God in each Dispensation of his work; and were moved upon by the living Spirit of light and power, according to the order of that day; and which, by

the operations of the same Spirit, in the last Dispensation, are unitedly rising and progressing into higher and higher degrees of perfection. The *wings* of the cherubims signify that they are destined to fly above the attractions of the earthly sphere. Therefore, "when they lifted up their wings to mount up from the earth, the same wheels also turned not from beside them." But, "when they stood, the wheels stood; and when they were lifted up, these were lifted up;" showing that there are times of stillness and times of rising into higher degrees in the Divine system of operations. (See Rev. viii., 1.)

7. This order of wheels moves in the circle of the wheels of the "Ancient of Days," which were to roll through the earth like burning flames, to cut down all earthly thrones, and to consume and destroy all the corrupt institutions and oppressive powers of the world. (See Dan. vii., 9, 12.) These wheels are rapidly rolling on by the light and power of Divine revelation in the providential and spiritual orders, and are progressively effecting this work throughout the world.

8. But it is evidently the work of this present Dispensation, or "days of the voice of the seventh trumpet" (see Rev. x., 7), to progressively rise higher and higher from the earth—that is, from all the propensities and ties of the earthly fallen nature. These "wheels, and their whole body, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings, were full of eyes round about." This signifies that every soul that is joined to the Divine order of God's work revolves in a connected circle around the progressively-increasing and living work of each successive degree and day of the Dispensation. And all are directed by an emanation, in degrees of order, from the throne of the *Almighty Spirit.*

9. And all, both cherubims and wheels, being in all parts "full of eyes," show that all souls in this circle of wheels have a peculiar sphere adapted to their order and genius to revolve in; and that Divine light from the living Spirit is dispensed to them severally, sufficient to discern the present order and work of the day in which they are called to unite.

10. In this manner, everyone has Divine revelation in his

own soul, by which to know the *true* work of God. But "these wheels followed to the place whither the head looked." This signifies that all souls in these circles must be led and guided by the revelation of *primary and fixed foundation principles* that are fully known and clearly understood by every individual member in this Divine system, from the greatest even to the least; which forms the basis of the circle in which they are called to move; and which will thus serve as an *infallible standard* by which to judge *all* revelation, and to "try the spirits, whether they be of God."

11. This "knowledge of the Lord" constitutes these eyes in the body of Christ, it being composed of such spiritually intelligent members. And thus, as "the light of the body is the eye," and the whole body being "full of eyes" in every part, it is full of Divine light, and therefore cannot be led astray by any inspiration from the powers of darkness.

12. And although every succeeding true revelation brings an increasing degree of purity and order (for "of the increase of Christ's kingdom, to order and establish it, there shall be no end," Is. ix., 7), yet all such revelations confirm the rudimental principles of every preceding Divine revelation in all former Dispensations, and every spirit that speaks to the *contrary* is *false*. It is thus that "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy," or of inspired Divine revelation, both in the general and governing circle and in the Divine system, and also in the subordinate circles, which, by affinitive relation, enlighten the sphere of each individual being in whom is "the spirit of the living creatures" or powers.

13. The "*burning coals*" signify the refining work that souls must pass through to become living members of this Divine order. And the "*lamps of fire* that went up and down among the living creatures" signify the central light of revelation, to direct all the circles of this system of the work of God. And "the *hands of a man* which appeared under the cherubims' wings, on their four sides," signify that all these operations will

be effected through the medium and agency of man in the four quarters of the earth.

14. Thus, according to the foregoing principles, all things and all beings in the various circles of the Divine order, do, and for ever will, revolve in their respective spheres, *like wheels within wheels*, all being directed by the *primary* revelations from the spiritual powers above, and governed by the *Divine Voice from the Eternal Throne*, which is above all, and which rests upon the Divine order of *the Cherubims of his glory*.

INTRODUCTION TO PART II.

We can have no greater evidence that any principle, or system of principles, originates in spiritual evil or is of human origin, than the fact of its being of *corruptive and degenerative tendency*, as also of its being unprogressive, inert, and fixed in its character; as witness the dogmatical antichristian orders and churches which prohibit human progress by shutting up the doors of a continuous revelation of God's will to man, and thus *forbid the travail of the soul into a more perfect state*—the only purpose for which any Divine revelation was ever given.

We are aware that the prophecies and visions recorded in Scripture have been and are by different expositors variously interpreted, according to the degree of spiritual light and understanding and state of the interpreter. And inasmuch as the people called *Shakers* differ in all these particulars from most of the readers of this work, it is not to be expected that any will, *at first* and in *all* respects, see eye to eye with them.

But let everyone, unbiassed by educational prepossessions, sectarian prejudices, or a dogmatic love of and adherence to their own previously acquired opinions, decide any point of difference that may arise according to the best light, in view of the evidence herein laid before them.

It is quite certain that the general plan and order of procedure in the Divine economy, in relation to the redemption of the human race, have frequently been pointed out by four figurative representations. And the "four spirits" of the heavens spoken of by Zechariah (vi., 5) undoubtedly refer to the light and *life* of prophetic revelation emanating from Four

Dispensations; for although the Fourth had not yet come, yet its order, power, and spirit was the theme of all the prophets, as being the ultimate and finishing work of God with the human family.

The Prophet Ezekiel saw, in vision, these Four Eras, by the four successive risings and admeasurements of "the holy waters which issued out from under the threshold of the sanctuary"—temple or Church of the Era.

In the *first* of these admeasurements the waters came up only to a man's ankles; in the *second*, to his knees; in the *third*, they took in the man to his loins; but in the *fourth* and *last*, they became an impassable river, which carried whoever entered into it clear above the earth.

This shows the progressive increase of the flowings of the waters of life in each succeeding Dispensation, which concentrated and were completely developed in the fourth and last, in which everything that *had life* was healed, whithersoever the waters of that impassable river came, betokening that every intellectual and intelligent being that received the *life power* of the Church of the Fourth Era would be made alive in the true order of God.

For "these waters go" (from the Church) "down into the desert"—that is, the spiritually-barren or desert-like state of the Churches—"and thence into the sea" (world), and being brought forth into the sea, the waters thereof were healed;" this "*sea*" is the great source of human nature whence all natural beings are brought forth, full of corruption, infirmity, and spiritual death; which plainly shows the state of the fountain from whence they flow. (See Rev. xvii., 15.)

Thus the waters proceeding from this corrupt sea, are "peoples, nations, kindreds, and tongues," which carry "*the whore of Babylon*," with all "her abominations," that is, all the civil and religious or ecclesiastical systems of the world.

And the waters of this "*sea*" must be cleansed and purified by these waters of life before they can ever bring forth living souls that are prepared for the Gospel net, which souls are the

"fish" that should be in great multitudes in those "healed waters." (See Ezek. xlvii., 1—12.)

The same general plan or order is again exhibited in the vision of the "four horns of the Gentiles, which scattered Judah and Israel," God's figurative covenant people. This also shows the scattering of the spiritual Israel, or first Christian Church.

Then came "four carpenters" (builders) "to fray and cast out the horns of the Gentiles which lift up over the land of Judah to scatter it" (Zech. i., 18—21); that is, to "divide the *land* for gain," which the Lord gave for the *one common inheritance* of his people, to be by them *equally* occupied and improved (see Num. xxxiii., 54); and thereby to "scatter" every man's private individual inheritance and right to occupy the land after the unequal and oppressive manner of the nations of the earth.

Not only was the land equally divided among the tribes and families and individuals in Israel, but there were also established four distinct degrees—consecutive ascending orders of sabbaths, prefiguring the Four Dispensations, by which a progressive curtailment of the corrupt and selfish principles of fallen nature that disinherit men of the earth, thereby producing among them inequality, poverty, and slavery, were effected on the one hand; and on the *other* a successive and increasing development of the eternal principles of right and truth, ultimating in the setting up of the kingdom of heaven upon earth in the Fourth and last Dispensation, in which each and all are not only the equal objects of *God's* love and care, but are also the objects of the *equal love and care of each other.*

These four horns that thus scatter Israel, destroy unity, and cause every man to "seek his *own* gain from his *own* quarter," are the leading powers of the *generative man;* "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life," and the selfish ambition of the world, which induce men to contend for, and try to excel in, the possession of the earth, and consequently in power and dominion over their fellow-men. And by this are created those giants in

wickedness, the warriors and conquerors of the world, for to rob men of their *inalienable right to the earth* and enslave the people is the leading object of all wars.

Religious ambition, or seeking the pre-eminence, working in union with the three other "horns of the Gentiles," did also overthrow and "scatter the power of the holy people," destroy the united inheritance of the primitive Church, and tread down the holy "city" and its sacred order of love and union. (See Rev. xii., 2; and Dan. xii., 7.)

Thus the Gentile system of generation and selfish individual possessions, or "dividing the land for gain," is to this day the order in Babylon of all the nations professing the Christian name, and of all their institutions.

These "horns of the Gentiles," or earthly powers of the corrupt world—religious and irreligious—can only be overthrown and cast out by these "four carpenters" or builders that have come forth in the power and spirit of the Four Dispensations, who are united and their work perfected in the *Fourth and last.*

By this power these builders will "cast out those horns," or worldly powers of the Gentiles; and as fast as this is effected, they will also proceed to build the "City of the Most High," by the principle of *love*, *purity*, *meekness*, and *unity;* for they are the four rudimental foundation pillars of the kingdom of heaven, which can alone secure to each individual his just and equal inalienable rights, and at the same time effect a united interest in all things, both temporal and spiritual.

This forms the true Christian order, and is a criterion and test which makes the labour of proving the quality of (and the source from whence has proceeded) every revelation comparatively light and easy.

Other *tests* and *evidences*, by which to discern and detect true or false spirits and true or false revelation, consisting of doctrines that result from the principles made known to man by revelation in each of the Four Eras and their Churches, will be subjoined.

These Tests, we are fain to believe, will, if once understood and digested, be a talisman or charm against the spells of all witches, wizards, familiar spirits, necromancers, soothsayers, dreamers, and "false prophets and false Christs;" and will thus prove a perfect guard and protection against the influences and machinations of all seducing, deceiving, and evil spirits, and their spurious revelations and lying wonders, whether they be in the visible or invisible world, and whatever *name* or *character* such spirits may assume for the purpose of imposing upon the credulity of the simple and honest, or the ignorant and unwary, even though it be in the name and character of an "angel of light."

PART II.

THE FOLLOWING CODE OF DOCTRINES, TOGETHER, MAY SERVE AS ADDITIONAL AND SPECIFIC

RULES FOR TESTING DIVINE REVELATION.

FAITH.

From the foregoing it will be seen that every Dispensation has its *foundation* principles. The *Patriarchal* had its *moral law of nature*, for the regulation of man in the animal work of propagating the race. The *Mosaic* had its laws, statutes, and judgments, with the twofold design of *reproof and instruction*, and its hieroglyphical prophesyings of the future. The *first Christian Era* was also possessed of certain definite and eternal principles, which are contained in the *life* and *doctrines* of the *Messiah*, who was the true embodiment of that Dispensation, and whose doctrines formed the foundation of the first Gospel temple—"And other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid" (1 Cor. iii., 11); "Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone" (Eph. ii., 20).

For "*thus saith the Lord God*, Behold, I lay in Zion, for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation; he that *believeth* shall not be confounded" (Is. xxviii., 16; and 1 Pet. ii., 6) by any spirit, whether upon earth or in the spirit-world. The word of Christ to his disciples was, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that *believeth* and is baptised shall be saved; but he that *believeth not* shall be damned." (Mark xvi., 15, 16.)

Here arises the question, What *is* that Gospel? The answer is—it is composed (as above stated) of certain specific doctrines and laws, which doctrines and moral laws are deduced from the *words* and *works*, or *life* of Jesus Christ; nor can any doctrine be received as *Christian* that is not attested by these two witnesses.

SUMMARY.

Every principle or doctrine than can possibly be demonstrated as *true*, becomes a proper *test* of spirits and of their real character.

All truth will agree and harmonise; and any spirit that attempts to pervert or gainsay what is known to be positively true, cannot itself be true.

As has already been remarked, *faith in Christ*—that is, the *Christ-principle* of purity and holiness—is one good and unerring *test* of spirits.

BAPTISM.

WHAT is Christ's baptism, without which no soul can be saved by his Gospel? The baptism of *Moses* was with *water*. After every act of defilement, the Israelites were to bathe and wash their bodies clean with water, as a type of the washings of the regeneration by the waters of life with which their souls should be baptised under the Gospel Dispensation (see Lev. xv., 16, 18), and by which they should be purified and cleansed from all unrighteousness.

John the Baptist never embraced Christianity nor entered the kingdom of heaven. For Jesus said, "He that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matt. ix., 2)—John—who was still under the law; yet many of his disciples

left him and followed Jesus: and John himself testified, "I indeed baptise you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear, shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." (Matt. iii., 11.) "But Jesus himself baptised not" with water (John iv., 2), although in some instances "his disciples" did; as also they occasionally circumcised, and practised other Jewish ceremonies. (See Acts xv., 1, 3, and xxi., 23—26.) Jesus himself was baptised with the Holy Spirit. (See Matt. iii., 16.)

It therefore remains true that none can be *saved* unless they become baptised with the fire of Christ's Spirit. For "who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. (Mal. iii., 2, 3.) "In those days and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found; for I will pardon them whom I reserve." (Jer. l., 20.) "Thy people shall be all righteous." (Is. lx., 21.) "And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion and he that remaineth in Jerusalem shall be called holy; even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem." (Is. iv., 3.)

SUMMARY.

No enlightened and *good spirit* will controvert the doctrine of *spiritual baptism* being essential to salvation from sin, and from that nature that produces sin.

SIN.

EVERYTHING contrary to the doctrines or life of *Jesus Christ* always was, is, and always will be *sin* abstractly, whether committed in ignorance or knowledge.

By the law of Moses was given a definition and the knowledge of sin, therefore "sin is the transgression of the law" of Moses, for the law is righteous, holy, and good. (See Rom. vii., 12.)

By the law of Christ, as contained in his commandments, is given the knowledge of the law of righteousness. The first of which is, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father [and Mother] which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. v., 48.) He, Jesus Christ, was perfect. He was the Son of God. (Matt. iii., 17; and xvii., 5.) "And to as many as received him, to *them* also gave he power to *become* the sons of God" (John i., 12); and "everyone that is perfect shall be as his master." (Luke vi., 40.) So that "both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one, and he is not ashamed to call them brethren." (Heb. ii., 11.) By this law every follower of Christ must "walk as he walked" (1 John ii., 6) and live as he lived. He is the *Rule* by which their character must be squared.

SUMMARY.

Any ministration from the spirit-world that does not recognise the existence of evil—wrong—sin, must itself be from a dark and sinful spirit.

SALVATION.

THEREFORE, what being *saved* by the baptism of Christ signifies may be learned from the very *name* of *Jesus*. "Thou shalt call his name *Jesus*, because he shall *save* his people *from their sins*."

(Matt. i., 21.) "*Jesus*" therefore means *Saviour*. In the Hebrew language the name is Joshua; that is, Jesus in the Greek and Joshua in the Hebrew are synonymous, signifying *Saviour*. Accordingly the Jews in the Nazarene's time spoke of Joshua, "the Carpenter's son." *Being saved* has not a special reference to a *future* world or *state*, but to the *present* actual condition of those who, while on earth, believe and are baptised. So that none are *his* people practically who are living in their sins. Thus salvation from sin is the first Christian doctrine. "For this very purpose was Christ, the Son of God, manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil," "for the devil sinneth from the beginning." (1 John iii., 8.)

SUMMARY.

Every intelligence from the realms of light and purity will surely teach men the possibility and necessity of salvation from sin and sinful desires.

LOVE OF GOD TO MAN.

THE love of God to man is proved from the fact of *creation*. How can God but love the work of his own hands? And notwithstanding they rebelled against him by the *fall*, the love of God is proved by all the dispensations of his grace to man. It was this love that raised up prophets in every age to instruct, reprove, warn, and save from present affliction, and to comfort with the hope of future good the poor afflicted children of men. And finally, "God so loved the world" of mankind, "that he sent his only-begotten Son, that the *whole human race* might through him be saved." (John iii., 16, 17; and 1 John iv., 9.)

For "God hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but rather that they should turn from the error of their ways and live." (See Ezekiel xviii., 23.)

SUMMARY.

All true and good spirits are witnesses in their communications, at all times, of the love that God bears towards the human race, which causes him to provide the fullest means for their final and perfect happiness.

LOVE OF GOD IN MAN.

THIS is the first principle of goodness in man, from which every virtue and all truth and righteousness proceed and grow, as from their proper root. Hence the *first* commandment from God to man is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, thy mind, thy soul, and thy strength." (Deut. vi., 5; and Mark xii., 30.) And again, "Thou shalt have no other gods (idols) before me." Nothing upon which man's affections can be placed should be otherwise than *secondary* to the love of God in the human soul; or that they would not sacrifice to do the will of God—"Love is the fulfilling of the law." (Rom. xiii., 10.

To the wicked Jews, Jesus said, "I know you that ye have *not* the *love of God* in you." (Mark v., 42.) In Jesus was the love of God *perfected*, for the *first time* in any human being. "This is the love of God, that ye keep his commandments." (1 John v., 3.) "I came not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John vi., 38.) Again, Jesus affirmed, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I *do* always those things that please him." (John viii., 29.) And he continued to *prove* his love to God by his "obedience unto death, even the

death of the cross." (Phil. ii., 8.) And greater love to God cannot be, than that a being lay down his life in obedience to him.

SUMMARY.

It is plain, then, that God loves his creature man, and seeks, through the influence of many means, to do him good, by inducing man himself to become unselfishly good. And therefore this is one test of revelation, as to whether it be of evil or Divine origin.

LOVE OF MAN TO MAN.

"THOU shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." (Mark xii., 31.) "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another." (John xiii., 35.) "If a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (1 John iv., 20.) Again, "Let us not love in word, but in deed." (1 John iii., 18.) Now, how can any soul consistently profess to have the love of God, and to love his neighbour as himself, when he is not willing to give him an equal inheritance with himself in even those things that perish with the using—the temporary things of earth?

Therefore, whenever men see a body of people, comprising the high and low, rich and poor, bond and free, white or coloured, male and female, of all classes and nations, who are all enjoying one united interest in things spiritual and temporal, as brethren and sisters in Christ, and who have proved themselves in these principles for a goodly period of time, they may know that *it* is the *true* Church or body of Christ—the Zion of God to which "*all peoples*" may freely "flow," as to an ark of safety, a fountain of love, and work of salvation.

This order of the kingdom of God upon earth is inimitable by all the wisdom and powers of natural man; as was shown to

the prophet in his visions of God of the spiritual building of the "*latter day*," when he was commanded to go into the field where no foundation of any building was, and it was said unto him, "In the place where the Highest beginneth to show his city, there can no man's building be able to stand." (2 Esdras x., 53, 54.)

The time when the Highest began to show his spiritual city was at the day of Pentecost, by the operative influence and teachings of his Spirit, which resulted in a perfect oneness of feeling *internally*, and a community of all their earthly goods *externally*. This was effected *not* as an *ultimatum* to which they had deliberately set out to attain, but it was unexpected and unlooked for, though a necessary consequence of their own individual spiritual state and condition.

It was the labour of Jesus to root up and destroy in his disciples all the principles of sin, and, in pursuance of this object, he thus attacked their selfishness and distrust of God: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust do corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal." (Matt. vi., 19.) And again, "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek); for your

Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. vi., 25—33.)

Thus did Jesus strive to detach their minds entirely from this world, to cut them off from the cares of supplying even the necessaries of life, thereby leaving them to depend and trust entirely upon Divine Providence for the supply of all their bodily wants; even as David prayed, "From my *necessities*, O Lord, deliver me." "For after all these things do the Gentiles seek." And when he sent them out to preach the Gospel, "he commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey save a staff only, no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse, but be shod with sandals, and not put on two coats." (Mark vi., 8, 9.)

It was thus that he would have them *practically* "seek first the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness," by actually leaving the *temporal* entirely out of the question for the *present*, and as a preparation for that which was to follow. For Jesus designed, in and through them, to create new heavens and a new earth, and by creating the "*new heavens*," the *spiritual* or soul first, *that* would bring forth the "*new earth*," or its *body* in temporal things. And in this way God would indeed "*add* unto them all those things" that he knew they would have need of. "Their strength was to sit still" (Is. xxx., 17), and let God work by his Spirit to will and to do according to his own wisdom.

It is therefore evident that a community was not only not anticipated and unexpected, but also unthought of, and of course undesigned by the Apostles; but they, after having been together in one place in deep tribulation of soul and fervent prayers to God, were baptised with the Christ-Spirit to such a degree as wrought them up to and induced in them the highest state of spirituality of which they were susceptible. This caused them to feel the strongest conviction and deepest abhorrence of sin and of the nature of sin, by opening to their

view their own actual state of soul, as contrasted with the infinite purity and perfection of the Divine Spirit and presence, with which they were thus temporarily baptised for that very purpose. Under this influence many began to cry out in very agony of soul, "Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?" (Acts ii., 37.)

Then it was, and not before, that God could "begin to show his city," for he had now suitable materials with which to commence to build. He could now work to the establishing of that order in temporal things by which to supply the physical wants of his people, which he had designed from the beginning.

For the people received that conviction for sin that led them to show their deeds to the Apostles. In other words, they confessed and forsook their sins; and, as a consequence thereof, became so "kindly affectioned one towards another," and experienced for each other such a depth of brotherly love, that it was soon found that the highest delight and happiness of everyone was best promoted by administering to the comfort and consolation of every other member of the body of Christ *in all things*—temporal as well as spiritual.

It was in this manner that the love of God and of man burned up and destroyed the love of sin and self, and community was the necessary result; so that "all these things" were added to the "one thing needful," which they had sought and found. Here, then, was the place where the Lord God *began* to "show the city" which he would build in Christ's Second Appearing, as a permanent city of peace, love, and plenty. And although this order was seemingly lost in the fall and final overthrow of the primitive Church, yet man, seeing the temporal advantages to be derived from such a system, has never ceased the attempt, in any age, to build upon the foundation then laid by the Spirit. But no such "building" of man's has ever yet been "able to stand." These buildings—these efforts at social structures—lacked a religious basis, ay, the corner-stone itself—*celibacy*. Where there are husbands and wives and private property, there will be "fightings,"

and these necessarily lead to disintegration and dissolution. A. J. Davis speaks of seeing "vast brotherhoods of souls in the Summer-land." These certainly are not a marrying people, neither do they hold private poverty. Why not bring the Summer-land down to us? Why not have a heaven of brotherhoods and sisterhoods on earth? Noyes, in his late volume, estimates that there have been "seventy-six attempts in America" to carry out a practical Communism, and all have been failures except the *Believers* called Shakers. The Oneida Community is nothing more than a joint-stock company, with social misdirections, prolonging and intensifying the sinful pleasures of selfish gratification. T. L. Harris's society in Western New York, though yet in its swaddling clothes, has had serious difficulties threatening its overthrow; the cloud still hangs over it. Any method devised to spiritualise the carnal will prove abortive. One after another have these socialistic structures gone down, to know no resurrection on their old bases. The Shakers alone, 'mid wars, revolutions, and the wreck of empires, have stood, solving the problem—the practicability of "holding all things in common."

In a thousand ways and forms this principle of unity of purpose and effort has been adopted and applied amongst men, to nearly all the common pursuits of life, from a cotton factory to a Fourier's association or an Owen's community. In all these, however, the object aimed at has been the antipodes of that sought by the disciples on the day of Pentecost. It has been either naked and direct self-aggrandisement, as in companies or corporations, or else to form a community as an *object* merely for the supply of physical wants and comforts, exclusively seeking what and how they should eat and drink and be clothed, and how they should "lay up treasures upon earth" to the greatest amount and extent; and this as the sole and main end of their being, either by putting the kingdom and its righteousness *last*, or omitting it altogether, thereby exactly *reversing the counsel of Jesus to his followers.*

It may be objected, that the condition of the followers of

Jesus when having "all things common," where every want was easily and quickly supplied, was widely different from that state set forth in the Scriptures above quoted of "Take no thought," &c. This is granted. So was the state of Israel, when compelled by outward circumstances to depend from day to day wholly upon God for their daily bread while on their way to the promised land, different from what it was when they reached that "glory of all lands, flowing with milk and honey," and fertile beyond anything now known upon earth; yet it was the one state that prepared them for the other. They learned in the wilderness dependence, faith, obedience, all of which they needed to enable them to make a right use of the good things that they were afterwards entrusted with in the promised land. And thus, when Jesus led his disciples about or sent them off on a journey without any visible means of support, they were often fed in a miraculous manner; but *even then* he *promised* a *different* order "*now in this life*," in the future, where, as Israel did in Canaan, they must live by the labour of their "own hands."

The true Spiritualist (Christian), in seeking God and salvation, finds the kingdom of heaven to be where love produces community; while the natural man, attracted by his earthly selfish instincts, seeks to build upon God's foundation that which is not "able to stand." It is as those who followed Jesus for the loaves and fishes which were the results of his miracles. Whereas, others followed him through love, and to *witness* his miracles, who therefore rightly and justly partook of the fruits thereof, as *for them* it was that the miracles were wrought.

SUMMARY.

By this "we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

The *absence* of true fraternal love amongst men has produced the present evil condition of human society, in all its relations, internal and external. By love, therefore, the inhabitants of

the new heavens and earth were to be pre-eminently distinguished.

If a man really loves his neighbour as himself, it will *first* as the outward and inferior be *visible* to "all men," by their equal participation between them of all earthly goods and substances; yet this is but the fruit and evidence of their equal participation in spiritual treasures pertaining to salvation.

If communion of earthly goods be sought as an *end*, it is of man; but if it follow as a consequence of an *inward principle* —love—it is of God.

A baptism of the Holy Christ-Spirit from the resurrection heaven effected it in a short time, within the first century of the Christian Era, by withdrawing man's affections from things below, and placing them on things above. They became transformed.

Jesus taught men to "take no thought" as to what they should eat, drink, or wear, as a *first* object, but to "seek *first* the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness," and promised that inferior necessary things "*should be added.*"

A strong desire for salvation *from sin*—the sin of selfishness —is the best preparation that a soul can have for community of interest in earthly things.

Sin and self produce *private* property.

Innocence and self-denial produce *community* of property.

The first Christian Church set before men an example of love—a oneness of interest in all things. And although the order was lost to the external view with the fall of the Church, yet men have never ceased to admire and try to imitate it, for the sake of temporal advantage—the *loaves and fishes.*

In all ages, and in a thousand ways and forms, the principle has been adopted and applied among men; but especially in our own day, and by our own generation. Yet the object aimed at has invariably been diametrically opposite to that of *the men of Galilee*—loving souls baptised of Christ. They have sought *first* what they should eat and drink, and how they should be clothed.

The kingdom of heaven is where *love produces community;* but when man, from a selfish motive, seeks to build upon the foundation of "all things common," his building is a "man's building, and it is not able to stand."

Love to man is therefore a sure and certain criterion of all Divine Revelation. Anything contrary to, or short of, this test —love to man—emanating from the spirit-world of angelic life, is proof that it comes from an order of spirits that is *not* joined to the Church of Christ in that world, and who, therefore, are not proper ministers to "the heirs of salvation" who belong to the Church of Christ upon earth.

FORSAKING ALL.

"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God," in which they have "*all things in common*, and no one saith of aught he possesses, *It is mine.*" Matt. xix., 24; and see Acts ii., 44.) "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" (Mark x., 23.) "Except a man forsake ALL that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." (Luke xiv., 33.) Of course, then, he cannot enter the company of the saints, among whom each one seeks "another's" wealth, and *not his own* (1 Cor. x., 24); where the all of *all* is consecrated to God and each other, there can be no "rich man."

SUMMARY.

This radical doctrine establishes beyond dispute that private selfish property, to *any amount*, is incompatible with original Christianity, and is also a sure test of the quality, standing, and truthfulness of all spirits, and of their communications.

VIRGIN PURITY.

Virgin purity arises from the pure and resurrection nature of *Christ*, and is the foundation principle of the Gospel of salvation, the work of *regeneration* being the opposite of the principle of generation, which is the foundation principle of the world, or of animal man in nature.

As private or individual property forms the basis of and is essential to the marriage or generative relation and its consequences, so is virgin purity the basis of and essential to a community of property, without which it cannot be supported.

Generation being the life of the inferior order—the world—man cannot any faster than he dies to it rise into the superior or real spiritual life. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matt. v., 8), our Saviour said, and he also declared that "he that looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. v., 28), whether he be married or unmarried. Thus showing that lust is an adulterous gross nature that attracts the human race by sensual pleasure, thereby causing the violation of the covenant by which God joined male and female together for Divine *use* and not carnal abuse. Moreover, he affirms that "there be eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake; he that is *able* to receive it, let *him* receive it." (Matt. xix., 12.) All who have been baptised with Christ's baptism of fire and the Holy Spirit are able to receive this saying—"It is not good to marry."

Thus the twelve Apostles and all who stood in a true and near relation to Christ in that day did make themselves eunuchs, by forsaking all earthly, natural, and partial connections and relations, according to *Jesus Christ's own example* and positive requirement, that "except a man did forsake father, mother, *wife*, children, and houses and land" with all

their concomitants, "he could not be his disciple." (Mark x., 29, 30.) This constituted them "a kind of first fruits" of the Gospel of Christ's second appearing, wherein all who had wives would make themselves eunuchs for the sake of an inheritance in the kingdom for which Jesus taught men to pray *until it should come upon earth.* And thus "those who might have wives be as though they had none," even as those who might possess property would be as though they possessed it not. Jesus did not marry. He walked the earth a pure, practical Shaker. (1 Cor. vi., 29, 31.) It was this principle of *virgin purity* that enabled Jesus Christ and his Apostles to have all things common. And he that doeth or teacheth anything against this law of *purity* is less than the "least in the kingdom of heaven," whether it be under the sanction of the outward law of "the children of this world, who marry and are given in marriage," or that inspiration be taken as a cloak for such licentious and carnal gratification.

The principle of *purity* is operating in a greater or less degree in the world, more perhaps in the present day than at any former period, and some are thereby enlightened to see the depravity of the fallen *generative nature* in all its workings, except for producing offspring, even in the marriage state, and are led to seek a reformation in these respects. And a few at times, realising, as did the Apostles, that this animal nature "is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. viii., 11), have abstained from all its gratifications, and for a time have, as the Apostle said, "run well." There are Spiritualists who are just waking up to the hygienic and common-sense notion that all persons, though on the natural plane, should occupy single beds. Swine by twos and tens even pile into one nest, with no thought of good ventilation or health. This might be expected of animals; but when will the men and women of the world, who are not slow to boast of progress, sufficiently understand the principles of physiology and of Shakerism to sleep in well-aired apartments, each by himself and herself?

Others, unwilling to *continue* bearing a full cross, have sought to blend the flesh and spirit, and have introduced what they call "*spiritual marriage*," spiritual promiscuity or community of wives, teaching that this corrupt nature is *thereby* sanctified. And they profess to support this demoniac doctrine by revelation from spirits, which is utterly contrary to all manifestations of *God* in every dispensation of his Divine light to man, and repugnant equally to the order of nature and reason.

This doctrine of spiritual marriage on the earthly plane is a vile prostitution of the principle of *virgin purity*, and a hateful abomination to the Holy Spirit of Christ, as declared in his reproof to the Churches of Ephesus and Pergamos. (See Rev. ii., 6.) To the *former* he saith; "This thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which *I also hate;*" and to the latter, "So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, *which thing I hate.*" (v., 15.) The doctrine of the Nicolaitans so hated by Christ was a *community of wives*, or pretended "*spiritual marriage.*" Therefore, whatever revelations teach or support it proceed from *false* spirits.

Also the Spirit, reproving the Church of Thyatira, saith: "I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman *Jezebel*, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication and to eat things that are sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornications, and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and they that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death, and I will give unto every one of you according to your works." (Rev. ii., 20—23.)

Thus all prophets and prophetesses—the true descendants of this unclean Jezebel—and all spiritual mediums who teach the flesh-pleasing and carnal doctrines of "*spiritual marriage*" and *community of wives*, and all who keep mistresses for carnal purposes, their light having become darkness, and having turned "the grace of God into lasciviousness," both they and their followers are "*killed with the second death.*"

SUMMARY.

Virgin purity, or total abstinence from all generative and carnal works, arises from the *progressive nature* of *man*, as is evident from the fact that the sphere or plane of reproduction is the first and lowest of all rational and intelligent existence. It is animal, and nothing else.

And also from the power which man possesses to rise into and enter upon the resurrection state or sphere while he is yet in his first body and on the earth.

"The pure in heart shall see God."

Virgin purity is the root of religious communion. Sexual relations confine the love-principle in man to a small circle, of which *self* is the centre.

Physical man first loves himself, then his wife, his children, his neighbourhood, his state, his country, his race. But when he receives the baptism of the love of God in Christ, kindling up the Divine within him, his love extends to all the intelligent creation of God, whether in or out of the body.

This love leads him to "hate his wife, his children, and his own life also." (See Luke xiv., 26.)

If the earthly man is thus to "hate his own life," as Jesus said all who come to him must do, it is very important to know what that referred to.

The life of the natural man is the *generative power*, by which he propagates or transmits his own life to other beings. This is therefore "his own life," the propagative life of lust, which he must hate. In which case, to be consistent, he will hate also the products of that lustful life-principle that caused him to "make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof," by *converting a woman into a wife*, and the *wife* into a *mother;* the *wife* and *mother* he will hate with vehement indignation, but *not* the *woman;* so also of children, houses, lands, &c. He will feel that such *generative connections*, however much increased and ramified, form by far too small and antagonistic a sphere for

the operation of the principle of *universal* spiritual Gospel love.

Thus he becomes a virgin character—a spiritual man; and is a religious Communist—a *Christian.*

Such were Jesus and his twelve Apostles, and such thousands have tried to be but failed, because the time or "day of full salvation, strength, and power" had not come. Christ had not made his second appearance to set up the kingdom of God upon earth, in which all men who even already "*had wives*, should be as those who had none."

As this is the order of the "angels in heaven, who neither marry nor are given in marriage," it is an infallible test by which every spirit who opposes virgin purity, "and teaches men so," is proved to be less than the least in that angelic or heavenly order, and that they have not yet risen into the resurrection state or sphere.

Light upon this subject is increasing among mankind. The truth is being understood. Many of the most enlightened physiologists affirm that it is a violation of natural laws, and injurious to both the physical and intellectual faculties, to use the reproductive powers for any other than procreative purposes. The "curse" consisted in the fact that man by his lusts would insist upon "ruling over the woman" in the generative order. Man has adopted the maxim becoming savages—"Might makes right." Woman, even upon the natural plane, should hold her person sacred—it is her right; and the man in married life who infringes upon these rights sinks for the time being below the animal creation; for the males among all species of animals are "ruled"—held in abeyance—by the females. Marriage on the natural plane is right; and the only legitimate function of the masculine and feminine relations on this plane is procreation. All besides is gratification, and this is death—spiritual death.

And when persons see that *this* is the *law of nature*, it will be manifest to them that it is but a short step to the full and perfect cross of Christ.

With such mighty power is this truth working its way among men, that many who received the light and refused to obey it, have abolished marriage, and adopted the abominable and damnable "doctrines of the Nicolaitans" and "Jezebel," and practise promiscuous "whoredom"—modern free-love-ism—claiming *that* to be the resurrection state, in which they "neither marry nor are given in marriage."

And as spiritual light continues to increase, thousands more will be forced to choose one of these two alternatives—either to follow the "*Oneida Perfectionists*," "free-love" Spiritualists, &c., in the wake of Jezebel and Nicolas; * or to become perfect Christians by making "themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake."

The *former* having by the power of truth once been made alive from the death and darkness that all are under by nature, and then having "crucified the Son of God afresh, and put him to open shame," by their filthy and obscene practices in *his name*, are really and truly partakers of "the second death;" while the *latter*, having "crucified the old man with all his affections and lusts," by the cross of Christ, after the example of the founders of the first and second Christian Churches, are thereby made partakers of eternal life, and over whom "the second death hath no power."

PEACE.

It has been a common and universal error, in all ages, among those who were not spiritually educated and enlightened, to imagine that the spiritual messenger who held immediate intercourse with them, and who was "*their God*," was

* Nicolas was one of the seven deacons in the primitive Church. He it was who introduced the doctrine of community of wives, because they had community of property.

the Creator of the universe; and, therefore, that whatever they were indulged in or permitted to practise was, *per se*, good and true.

And consequently, when in different ages the requirements of God varied, so that which was by "the Lord their God" allowed in *one* age was prohibited and condemned in *another*, and they could perceive that the *last* given laws, judgments, and decisions of "their God" were always the *most* true, and right, and good, they then came to the sapient conclusion that "*their God*" had *progressed*, and was all the time changing for the better.

This was about as abnormal an inference as it would be for travellers in a car going at the rate of fifty miles an hour to believe they were stationary, and that the fences and fields and buildings, &c., were passing by them at that rate of progress.

It is from these erroneous and absurd premises assumed by the professors of religion themselves, together with the inhuman persecutions and cruelties practised by them, that infidel writers have treated them, their God, and their theological systems, with so much ridicule and contempt.

Religion has been *more wounded in the house of its professed friends*, by illogical doctrines flowing from persons whose minds were beclouded and darkened by their sensual and wicked lives, than by all the infidel writers in creation. In fact, a great part of the deductions of these writers were *correct*, according to the premises religionists had given them.

If all that the Jewish nation did in the name of *their God* was in obedience to a *direct* emanation from the Divine mind, we can only say that *God has a right to do wrong.* For, in that case, that which was right two thousand years ago is beyond all controversy *wrong now*, in the light of the Fourth Era, or second Christian Church.

It is the human race who have progressed—travelled—changed—not *God.*

Moses was as God to Aaron; and Aaron was his priest to Israel. (See Ex. iv., 16.)

If the Great Creator of all things, in the first and second Eras spoke to Adam, Noah, Abraham, and others, *face* to *face*, how happens it that in the Third and Fourth Eras Jesus Christ was sent to be the *Mediator between God and man?* and that Jesus said, "He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me?"—thus clearly exhibiting the doctrine of *mediatorship*, and the office of *medium* between himself (Christ) and the different classes of character among the human family.

And therefore, upon this principle, it is obvious that the very best saints and Christians on earth are not now so *near to Christ* as the stiff-necked, lustful, butchering, and rebellious Jews were to *God the Creator of all!*

The truth is, as John said, "No man hath seen God at any time. The only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared Him."

When the Revelator John, fell down to worship an angel, he commanded him to desist, saying, "I am also of thy fellow-servants the prophets."

The Apostle Paul saith, "The law was ministered by angels" —not by Deity.

The more animal or sunken any people are, *the greater is the number of mediums* between them and the original Fountain or Source of good—*God.*

As in a Lancastrian school, where there are a great number of classes, each having a monitor, and none but the first monitor of the highest class having *direct* access to the schoolmaster, the scholars in the youngest and lowest class have the greatest number of monitors, or mediums between them and the principal teacher; so is God's government of this world.

And as many things would be allowed to the younger classes by their *monitors* which would be condemned and cut off when they rose into the higher classes, so it is with men; for their God, or spiritual monitor or mediators, would allow and bless them in that which would be condemned and cut off in the class or order above.

Jesus said, "Moses, *because of the hardness of your hearts*, suffered you to put away your wives; but *from the beginning it was not so*." Moses said, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth;" but I say, "Resist not evil: if a man smite thee on one cheek, turn to him the other;" "love your enemies"—*not kill* them. Moses taught *war;* Christ taught *peace*—was the Prince of Peace.

But we see that mankind were not able to receive him, his life, or his doctrines; and have gone in direct violation of them all—*especially in regard to peace and virgin purity*—up to this day, even though professing to be his followers, and guided by his Spirit.

Is it, then, any marvel if professed Christians, who have for fifteen centuries waged bloody and relentless wars against each other, under the banner and in the name of the "Prince of Peace," that the Jews, "because of the hardness of their hearts," should be directed of Moses to exterminate the wicked and abominable inhabitants of the land of Canaan?

But Jesus Christ said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight." (John xviii., 36.) Consequently, those who fight, and all who aid or abet *war* in any way, are not Christ's servants, whatever their profession. Contrariwise: *He* said, "Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, who causeth his sun to shine upon the evil and upon the good, and who sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." (Matt. v., 44, 45.) "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink." (Rom. xii., 20.) "Overcome evil with good." (v., 21.) "If a man smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." (Matt. v., 39.)

And Jesus declared that "they that take the sword shall perish by the sword." (Matt. xxvi., 52.) Therefore every spirit or influence that teaches that physical violence—war—can have any part in the Gospel of Christ, either in his first or

second appearing, is *false*, and under the darkness of this fallen world. For the Lord by his prophets declared that in the restoration of the Church of the latter day—"the city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel"—"Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, nor wasting nor destruction within thy borders." (Is. lx., 8, 14.) Again, the Lord declares that he (Christ) "shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, *neither shall they learn war any more.*" (Is. ii., 4.) For "they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Is. xi., 2.)

Thus in Jesus is confirmed the principle of *peace*, no less by his works than by his words; for "when he was reviled, he reviled not again." (1 Pet. ii., 23.) All his precepts and his life, ending as it did with a prayer for those who slew him, is a rebuke of war and bloodshed, proving him to be the *first* of that company so beautifully and touchingly described in his own words: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." (Matt. v. 9.)

SUMMARY.

God cannot minister good and truth to the human race, except as they become recipients thereof by a progressive development of their faculties and understandings.

It is man—*not God*—that changes. And all have to be blessed in that measure of light, and good, and truth they can bear, and by which they can be profited.

Therefore, if any spirit from the world of spirits sanction physical war in any of its phases, or under any circumstances whatever, it is positive and indubitable *proof* that such a spirit is either knowingly wicked, or is a comparatively ignorant spirit, of a low class and order, and is under one of the first two Eras, and that "he hath not yet seen Christ, neither known him," in either his first or second appearance.

TRUTH.

God is a God of *truth*. "It is impossible for God to lie." (Heb. vi., 16.) Any spirit that teaches contradictory doctrines, or which teaches contrary to Christ, who is "*the truth*," is not of God. For "He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." (Heb. xiii., 8.) And God promised, by the Prophet Isaiah, that "in the day when the Redeemer should come to Zion, and to them that turn away from ungodliness in Jacob. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord: My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever." (Is. lix., 20, 21.) This shows the continuance and *perpetuity* of the law of Christ (which was revealed in part in his *first* appearing), as being fully carried out in the time of his *second* appearing.

Consistency or truthfulness on the part of spirits who claim to be sent of God cannot be dispensed with; for all spiritual revealments, coming from one and the same source, confirm and sustain each other, though thousands of years intervene.

Many of the spirits speak lightly of the Scriptural inspirations or records of former Divine revelations, because there is no true light in themselves, rather than because they have so superior an insight into and great depth of revelation and wisdom, that *they* can detect the errors (if any) contained therein.

These tests, however, are designed to show that revelation and progress in the work of God, in each of the Four great Eras, involving as they do great and important radical changes, are all perfectly compatible with each other, notwithstanding the hatred and determined opposition with which those in the Mosaic Era had to contend from the *leaders in the Patriarchal*,

and those from the first Christian Era from the *leaders in the Mosaic*, and those of the second Christian Dispensation from the *hierarchy of the professed Christian world.* Each of these classes of opposers of progress (in their respective time) supposed the revelation of the *coming Era* would be subversive of and conflicting with the revelation of the one in which they lived.

Yet the authors and leaders of each succeeding Dispensation did invariably bear testimony to the Divine origin of its predecessor. Thus, Jesus said unto the Jews: "Do not think that I will accuse you unto the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" (John v.) Therefore he exhorted them to "search the Scriptures" of the past Dispensation, and said, "In them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me that ye might have life." Consequently, as the Jews thought that eternal life could be found in their Scriptures, they would not seek it in Christ, where only it can be obtained.

The ignorance, or pride, or selfish ambition of man has caused all the apparent contradictory opposition of one Divine revelation to another, in the different Dispensations, or in the various degrees of the same Dispensation.

In most of the instances in which great men, long since departed from this earth, have been announced as being present at the spiritual circles in the land, it is not true, as many suppose, that they are really present.

If the manifestation be genuine, then it is an emanation from the person named, proceeding through a greater or lesser number of spheres and mediums in those spheres, according to the distance that such person has progressed from the condition or state of the person or persons who are the receivers of the communication.

If, for instance, men think of Franklin or of any other distinguished persons, they form their ideas of him or them from

their history and character as known to them when upon earth, either directly or indirectly, as the case may be.

Therefore, provided Franklin has remained perfectly stationary, in and as to his spiritual travail and state, from the day of his death until now, then it is a supposable case that he should appear at a circle of persons whose state and condition are similar to his own.

But if Franklin has been progressing from faith to faith, and from one order to another in the invisible world, then, and in that case, a *real* manifestation of his *present self* would not be a manifestation of Franklin at all, as he now exists in the minds of mankind upon earth; and therefore *he could not be known.* Thus, if we were particularly and intimately acquainted with a boy seven years old, and should see him no more until he was sixty years of age, how little we should know of the person or real character of that man!

And as Jesus assumed different appearances, to adapt himself to the state of his disciples, after his exit from the body, so do those spirits for whose *name* men feel a veneration, and under the sanction of which they will receive truth that would otherwise be unpalatable, commission, when permitted to do so for good and wise purposes, some other spirits, whose sphere and state are favourable, to impart it *in their name,* and to personify their peculiar characteristics when upon earth. It is also clearly demonstrable that spirits often falsely assume the name of some highly distinguished and esteemed character, to give weight and authority to communications which in themselves are untruthful or evil.

All men, if worthy, have guardian angels, and sometimes ministering spirits to do their bidding, as in the instance of Jesus, who, when the centurion besought him to heal his servant, offered to go and do so; "but the centurion said, Lord, speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man in authority, having soldiers under me; and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When

Jesus heard it, he marveled and said, Verily, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." (Matt. viii., 5—10.)

These remarks of the centurion implied that he thought Jesus had many spirits who would come at his call, and go and do whatever he desired. This belief was common to the Jews. (See Acts xii., 15.)

On another occasion, Jesus stated that he could ask for and receive "more than twelve legions of angels."

An instance is known to the writer of a spirit that communicated for a great length of time in the name of a certain person, and then stated that he had never even seen that person, but was only his emissary, satellite, or ministering spirit—a medium between that person and his friends in the body.

The physical manifestations now so common are in all probability produced entirely by a low class and order of spirits, who are themselves but a small remove from the state of the world unto whom they are appointed or allowed to minister. This, besides accounting for the deceptions and tricks among mediums, shows the correspondence to be between the *world* of mankind *out of the body* and the *world* of mankind *in the body*—all being in the same spiritual state and sphere, and under the influence of the same passions, appetites, affections, and desires.

They are only to be depended upon as clearly demonstrating the immortality of the soul, the existence of the spirit-world, and a probationary state therein. But beyond that it is a great question whether they can be more relied upon than could the same number of *worldly* spirits in the body who are still in the *generative order*. These spirits are demonstrating Spiritualism as a science, and a science too that as yet, so far as its believers are concerned, is in its incipient stages.

It is also a question whether those who are *not* of the world, and who therefore do not need physical manifestations to convince them of the above truths, would not be in danger of losing the good already in their possession, instead of gaining

more, by coming in contact unnecessarily with that class of spirits. Human beings naturally grow to be like those with whom they associate. Dark circles naturally result in "works of darkness."

A late writer thus intelligently discourses upon this abstruse subject: "The craving want of the human mind at present is a *pneumatology*, or a science of spiritual life; for the evidences of an intimate connection between matter and spirit are daily becoming more marked and distinctive. The facts, however, are far ahead of the principles, as is evident from the various and conflicting opinions that are indulged; and the mind is waiting for some special law by which these developments or spiritual manifestations may be resolved and known.

"This law in the meantime is known to the spiritually intelligent, and can be made the subject of *rational* thought. The intermediate principle, or that ground common to spirit and matter, is the circumambient accretion 'which goes with the spirit into the spirit-world, and which forms the cuticle or envelope of the spiritual body.' It is this surrounding or clothing principle, composed of the 'finest parts of nature,' which recedes at the death of the natural body, and forms the continent or cuticle of the spiritual organisation. This envelope is composed of spiritual, *not material*, substances, and is that principle in the spiritual world which retains or gives form to the body, and which, at the same time, is the intermediate between the two worlds.

"Hence spirits act upon material things by touching the first principles or subtle forces of nature, and thus obtain a leverage of which man in the body is incapable. And this retroactive tendency is in proportion to the affinity with the affairs of the natural world which the spirit may have retained at death.

"Spiritual physical communications are numerous in proportion as the state of man is *low*. This is verified by the experience of past ages, and especially in the case of the Egyptians, and even of the Jews. When *sought for* by man, these

communications have been generally evil in their influence, and hence they are strictly condemned in the Scriptures.

"They imply the defect of angelic communications through the existing formal churches and want of faith in the Scriptures; and are thus of permission, in certain states of the human mind, in order to confirm the truths of revelation on the mere natural or sensuous plane.

"It has been remarked, by a physiologist well qualified to speak on this subject, from his knowledge of *pneumatology*, that some men are only *half* dead when they leave the natural world, and that, consequently, their minds are mundane still. Hence their apparitions are the reappearance of the soul in nature as the more appropriate sphere. He compares their life in the other world, to fœtuses in this world; and as birth here is sometimes incomplete, because the bodily changes have not properly occurred; so is birth into that world from this, or death as we term it, incomplete for the same reasons in the spiritual view of the case; and *haunting* is the oscillation between the mundane and supermundane spheres.

"This is certainly a good illustration of the subject. In proportion as death is perfect, this earthly sphere perishes from the mind; and, as men leave the world without dying to it, or leave it reluctantly, they are still haunting it and struggling earthward again. This may be verified by common experience in earthly life, as when, for instance, men die to certain states of mind, and succeed to others of a higher degree, the affinity for the former state is gone, and there is no real connection left between them; nay, there is an actual antipathy between them; and the death of the former states may then be said really to have taken place.

"In this point of view, vast numbers who are now leaving the world do not fairly die, or they die *very hard*. Their thoughts and feelings are all here; and is it any wonder that they should *haunt* their former states, and struggle hard to communicate with earth, in order to find subjects here by which to ultimate their ruling loves? They are mere abortions among

spirits, and their communications to us from that world consequently partake of the quality of their life.

"We have heard of a society who have gone to some part of Virginia to live according to laws which this class of spirits shall dictate. Nothing but insanity, or the most vapid folly, can possibly result from such an irrational mode of proceeding as this.

"Upon the principle here adduced, it is easy to see what quality of spirits seek generally to hold intercourse with the *natural world*. They are spirits who are hanging upon the confines of this earthly scene, and who are not yet fairly conscious of their birth into that other world. They have their philosophies, their insanities, their false dogmas, and all their earthly views and tendencies in full activity, as their vapid communications abundantly testify.

"Though these are foolish and insane, however, as to anything that is good, they are not wanting in the subtlety and malignity which pertain to the evil, and in this point of view there is no limit to the danger of consulting them. The hells we know are relentless, and these spirits may thence be made the fitting mediums to confirm and establish the direful persuasions of what is false, as well as to manifest the atrocious quality of what is evil.

"There is a lesson to be learned here by the earthly and sensual classes of society. If you are accumulating wealth, without reference to any *uses* to be performed, but only with the view of seeking honour and ease among men, you are educating for a sphere where you will be continually agitated by these ruling loves, only to be eternally thwarted and disappointed.

"If you are now seeking merely the indulgence of the senses, you will live only in phantasies hereafter, where you will be for ever duped and tormented by these very senses in fitful visions. If you are seeking to rule from self-love, and to gain dominion for the sake of that love, you will become the vile slaves of others by turns, who are in the lust of the same

direful passion. And if malignant passions more especially rule, by habits of malice and uncharitableness acquired here, you will feel the torments of that hell where each spirit is felt to be the enemy of the other, and where all conspire to swell the vast sea of conflicting and tormenting passions.

"Like seeks like in the world of spirits, and men wake up there as they go to sleep here."

Consequently, if those who are "in the resurrection" derive any proper spiritual food through the medium of the material or rapping spirits, it must first emanate from their own proper guardian spirits, who also employ and supervise those material or worldly spirits in its ministration, which spiritual food and its ministration must either accord and fully agree with all the tests and criterions of all the Eras, as set forth in this book, or good and unanswerable reasons and evidence be given for such disagreement with any particular test or principle amounting to a refutation or disproval of the same.

THE SPIRITUAL MAN.

And, finally, the greatest evidence that can ever be given to a man of the eternal truth and unchangeable principles of godliness, is realised when he finds in his *own* soul that abiding *revelation* by which he is freed from all doubts and uncertainties as to his present and future state, and of the duty which God requires of him. And when he experiences the operation of that Spirit, which enables him to live a perfect life, so that he can stand in justification, "having a conscience void of offence towards both God and man," according to the pattern exhibited in Jesus Christ, "the Captain of our salvation."

Thus being "not conformed to the world, but transformed" therefrom into the image of Christ, he will be in possession of

the infallible standard of revelation, which, when uprightly applied, will never fail; for herein are the words of Jesus Christ verified: "If any man will do my Father's will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." (John vii., 17.)

And everything in any soul short of *this* point—"*As Christ is, so are we in this world*" (1 John iv., 17)—will not only fail to give boldness and confidence in the great "day of judgment," but it will also leave such soul in a state of spiritual darkness that will utterly disqualify it to "try the spirits."

This Christ state being attained by all those individuals who compose the collective body or Church of Christ's Second Appearing, the following expressive prophecy is fulfilled: "The Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all. Then shall the *virgin rejoice in the dance*, both young men and old together; for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow. And I will satiate the soul of the priest with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the Lord." (Jer. xxxi., 11—14.)

This could never have been testified truly of the work of any *preceding* Dispensation; for, although the faithful subjects *therein* found justification according to the order and work of their day, yet they all acknowledged a lack of that *perfection* which only could have satisfied their souls. But these promises evidently point to the Fourth and last Era, wherein Christ "should make an end of sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness" (Dan. ix., 24), and in which no prophets should be required to teach the knowledge of the Lord; "for all should know him, from the least of them unto the greatest of them." (Jer xxxi., 34.)

And in *that* era, the universal testimony of *all* is, that the "serpent's head" (the lust of the flesh) is bruised in them; and that "*Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ.*" (Rev. xii., 10.) Thus, *in* Zion only, to which all the preceding Dispensations referred, and of which all the prophets and righteous have spoken since the world began, "has God placed salvation for Israel his glory;" (Is. xlvi., 13); whilst the most godly in former ages *all* came far short, in their personal experience, of a work of redemption; and says Isaiah (xxvi., 28), "We have been in pain; we have, as it were, brought forth wind; we have not *wrought* any deliverance in the earth."

The Apostles also (who stood in Christ's first Church) inform us that "David" (the man after God's own heart) "had not yet ascended into the heavens"—that is, the Christ heavens. (Acts ii., 34.) Therefore, if he, David, ever did ascend into the heavenly state, it must have been in consequence of hearing the everlasting Gospel preached to him in the spiritual world (see Dan. xii., 13); they also confessed that they themselves only "knew in part, and prophesied in part, seeing only as through a glass darkly;" expecting that, when that which was perfect, for which they were looking, should come, "then that which was in part should be done away." (See 1 Cor. xiii., 9, 10, 12.)

They acknowledged that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now" (Rom. viii., 22), from the effects of the *fall*, and from which they were not then saved. "And not only they, but we ourselves who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body," that is, the Church. (Rom. viii., 23.) From this and very many similar Scripture passages, it is evident that, as the righteous of former ages looked towards the Messiah as the *end* of their faith, so did the most holy men in the first Christian Church look for a more perfect salvation in a future day, in which they should receive that glorious reward "which the Lord, the righteous

Judge, would give to all those who love his second appearing." (2 Tim. iv., 8.)

"The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. xix., 10); therefore, all who stand in it are themselves prophets in the highest and best sense of the term; that is, in the same order and sense that Jesus Christ was a prophet, "who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins, and hath made us" prophets, and "kings, and priests unto God." (Rev. i., 5, 6.) Such a standing revelation and abiding spirit and power of Divine prophecy is given in this *last, final, and perfect Dispensation.*

Hitherto, all prophets were "thieves and robbers" (John iv., 8), not even excepting Moses himself; for he said to the people, "Hear now, ye rebels, must *we* fetch you water out of this rock?" (Num. xx., 10.) They were "*yet in their sins,*" and in possession and under the power of a sinful nature. Thus not only Moses, but all the prophets without exception (in a greater or less degree), appropriated the gifts of the Spirit to feed their fallen corrupt natures; and by this they "robbed God" (Mal. iii., 9), which is the true reason that none before Jesus had ever entered or ascended into heaven, agreeable to his testimony, which may not be disputed, that "no man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven (Christ), even the Son of Man (Jesus), which is in heaven." (John iii., 13.)

Therefore, the Apostle, speaking of all the prophets and righteous men of the former Dispensations, concludes that though "these all, through faith, obtained a good report, yet they *received not the promise,* God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." (Heb. xi., 39, 40.) The Apostles received ("in part") *that "better thing,"* the object of the faith of the prophets—*the salvation of their souls;* of which salvation diligent search and inquiry was made by those who prophesied of this grace that should come unto them; "searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify. Unto

whom it was revealed that not unto themselves but unto *us* they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel unto you." (1 Pet. i., 11, 12.)

All the prophets were *occasionally* baptised with the Christ spirit of prophecy as a gift, and they wrote and spake as they were moved by that Holy Spirit; but *Jesus* was the *first* upon whom the *Spirit* descended and *abode*. They were not prophets in the *full* meaning of the word, any more than the *dumb animal* that spake was a *man* because he once had the gift of speech. But Jesus declared that "as the Father hath life in himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in himself." (John v., 26.) And to his disciples he said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." (John xiv., 39.)

Therefore, as Jesus was a prophet, so also are his followers prophets, for "As he is, so are we *in this world*" (1 John iv., 17); and the glory which the Father gave to him he gives to his followers. (See John xvii., 22.) All other prophets and spirits must be subject to these true and genuine prophets; for "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." (1 Cor. xiv., 32.) For Jesus Christ left as a legacy to his brethren the "*Spirit of Truth*," which should not only "call past things to their remembrance," but also "show them things to come." (See John xiv., 26; and xvii., 13.)

Thus did Jesus permanently endue his followers with the spirit of prophecy, which constituted them emphatically "the prophets," and they became so initiated into the very spirit, and so grounded and established in the constituent principles of his spiritual kingdom, that they could intuitively perceive "things to come" from the ground of their knowledge of first causes, which must of necessity and inevitably produce their legitimate effects. These were a kind of first fruits of the spirit and principles of Christianity, or of the "testimony of Jesus." But *true Christians* (in the proper acceptation of the term) are those who have received Christ in his second advent upon earth, in and through the order of the female, and are

now standing in the "testimony of Jesus," loving not their carnal generative lives unto the spiritual death of their souls.

These are the "first ripe fruits" of the *Four* great Dispensations of God's grace to man; and they are only created and brought forth by the Fourth and last of these Eras, unto which the prophets and Apostles of the preceding Dispensations must all find a true relation, and be subject in the spirit of true obedience to its light and order, or never be "made perfect.

Thus is fulfilled the saying of Jesus, "The first shall be last, and the last first;" proving the truth of the Angel's words to Esdras, that God's judgments and works are like a ring. "And that as there is no swiftness to the first, so there shall be no slackness to the last." (2 Esdras v., 42.)

CONCLUSION.

THE conclusion, therefore, is, that there are four Eras or steps in the work of God with man—that it is *man* who takes these four steps towards God, not *vice versâ*—that each of the first three Eras was possessed of certain fixed principles and laws, peculiar to themselves, that regulated the people and formed the standard of judgment to them—that all those fixed principles and laws are added to, and included in, the order and governing principles and laws appropriate to the Church of the Fourth Dispensation—and that, as it pertained to the first three Churches to be the Divine channel or medium of revelation, and to superintend all spiritual manifestations, in those Eras, so the principles and laws of the Church of each particular Era were the tests by which to determine the verity and tendencies, as well as the falsity and effect, of every communication from the invisible world, and to dispose of them accordingly.

The wickedness of the people caused the fall of the first three Churches successively, and the fall of the Churches left those Dispensations without any head; the result of which was great "spiritual wickedness in high" and low "places," and confusion of faith and doctrines among men. And therefore the foundations of each succeeding Church were laid in "troublous times." (Dan. xi., 25.)

The Fourth Era has commenced, and the Church therof is now established upon earth.

Each Church had a human being as the instrument in the hand of God for its founder, namely—Adam—Abraham—Jesus—Ann.

And, as the oak in the acorn, so this last and final Church—the Millennium—is constituted of all the truths ever yet revealed or to be revealed to man, though very many of them are in embryo, or a latent and undeveloped state. "All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" are either stored up or are as yet *hid* in this Church of Christ.

The "elect" of God, gathered "from the four winds from the uttermost parts of the earth," into this Church, and who have made, or are making, "their calling and election sure," by obedience to the "WHOLE TRUTH of *God*," as revealed and taught therein, cannot, by all the confused and conflicting revelations and spiritual manifestations of the day, be in the least "deceived." They stand upon the rock of *reason*, purity, and celibacy.

From these views it is plain that the work of God has been progressively ascending, and raising the standard of holiness higher and higher among men; and that the latest Dispensation always possessed the largest measure of the Holy Spirit and the greatest number of Divine truths. As a principle, truth does not progress; but our *conceptions* of truth do progress.

In the perusal of the foregoing work, it will be seen that heaven and hell are not local places merely, but also *states*. Consequently, it is neither necessary nor consistent to believe

there is only *one* heaven and *one* hell, into one or other of which all souls enter at death, whatever Dispensation they might have lived under, and however small or great were the degrees of light and power in which they stood, or how near soever to infinity might have been the degrees of their obedience or disobedience.

Both reason and the Scriptures instruct and teach us that each Dispensation possessed a heaven and a hell peculiar and appropriate to itself—the receptacles of its own subjects; and also that all souls must ultimately progress to the final heaven or hell of the last Dispensation.*

And it is a great mistake, and no less contrary to reason than to the Scriptures, to imagine, as large classes in Christendom have hitherto done, that the everlasting state of souls is irrevocably fixed and determined at the *instant* of death; and that all souls—Christian and heathen, old and young, sane and insane, wise and ignorant, good, bad, and middling—go immediately to one or other of those two places of eternal happiness and misery, there to remain until the day of judgment, or the resurrection, and then to return; and, after again entering their natural bodies (which for that purpose must be *recreated*), to stand before "the great bar of God," to *again* receive *another* everlasting sentence to one or the other of those places. For be it remembered that, when anyone dies, the clergy say, "He is gone to appear before his Judge and Creator, to receive his final reward," &c.

It may pertinently be asked: If souls at death go directly to their final destination, what is the use of, or occasion for, the great day of judgment, and the resurrection of the natural body? For if an intelligent being of this earth can go to heaven *without his natural body*, and enjoy its unutterable happiness and ineffable felicity for thousands of years, what

* It may here, perhaps, be proper to remark, that it is not by any means to be supposed that all who are in any particular heaven or hell are in one homogeneous state. "One star differeth from another star in glory." There are, doubtless, gradations and orders without number, in both happiness and misery—heaven and hell.

will he gain by being again united to "flesh and blood," and taking it to "inherit," contrary to the Apostle Paul's testimony, that home of the spirit, "the kingdom of God?"

On the other hand, what would lost souls, from their "lake of fire and brimstone," be advantaged by such a judgment and resurrection?

These views and doctrines appear to be at variance with the teachings of all past and present *Divine* revelation. As is also the supposition that, because there is no salvation *except through Christ*, therefore the millions of sentient intelligent beings who existed before and since Christ's first advent upon earth, and who never so much as even heard the sound of his name, are for ever doomed, without remedy or hope, to the awful fate of an eternity of misery, notwithstanding that they never possessed the power of choice, or any possible means of escaping so dreadful a catastrophe.

To this innumerable company of lost souls must also be added the millions upon millions of infants whom the Calvinists (by "*decree*") sentence to destruction; also, all those whom the Romanists and Protestants cut off because they were not baptised with water before they died.*

If these were all doomed to an endless, hopeless place of undeserved punishment, it may well be asked, Where is the justice and righteousness of "the Judge of all the earth?" And who shall justify such ways of God to poor mortal man?"

No doubt the hackneyed but ill-understood case of the thief on the cross, who Jesus said should be that day with him in paradise, will here be brought up as an objection to the doctrine of a probationary state being continued in the spirit-world. But let the candid reader duly consider that *each Dispensation had its own heaven and hell.* The Jews believed in Hades (a

* It is the established faith of all Catholics, and of all orthodox Protestants, that no soul can possibly be saved unless he has been sprinkled, or baptised in some way, with water. Therefore the Sorbonne (the highest ecclesiastical court in France) proposed to devise some means of baptising infants before they are born.

place of departed spirits); and that in Hades there was a place called Gehenna, or hell, for the wicked, and a place called Paradise, or heaven, for the righteous. These are the heaven and hell of the Second, or Mosaic, Dispensation.

Now, what is called the "Apostles' Creed" declares that when Jesus died "he descended into hell" instantly, where he remained three days. And he himself said: "As Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so the Son of Man should be three days and three nights in the *heart of the earth;*" which may be thus explained:—

When Jesus left the body, he passed through the spirit-world of the Jewish Dispensation—for it was first in his way; and he *left the thief in Paradise,* while he himself descended to hell, or Gehenna, to labour among the wicked Jews; from thence he passed on, as Peter states, to the heaven and hell of the antediluvians, or First Dispensation. "He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who were disobedient to the preaching of Noah," and who had ever since been suffering the consequences of that disobedience and of their other manifold sins, which finally brought the "flood upon the world of the ungodly."

Is it reasonable to suppose that Jesus would have gone to the heaven and hell of the antediluvians, and preached to them, had it not been possible for them to believe and obey, and thus to rise into the paradise of the order above them, in which Jesus had left the repentant thief? It surely is not! "For this cause was the Gospel preached to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." (1 Pet. iv., 6.) They were to be judged by the Gospel, just as souls in the body are to be judged by it.*

* Paul was caught up to the *third* heaven, *i.e.,* to the heaven of the Dispensation in which he lived. Frequent mention is made in the Scriptures of *plurality* of heavens:—Deut. x., 14, "Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God;"—1 Kings viii., 27, Solomon, in consecrating the Temple, said: "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee;"—Ps.

It is a very cheering fact that the Scriptures do not teach any such inconsistent, unjust, irrational doctrines as are now being reviewed.

On the other hand, it is not any more consistent, or in accordance with reason and the Scriptures, to conclude, as Universalists of the Ballou and Whittemore schools have hastily done, that *all*, in every age and Dispensation and sect, will indiscriminately go to one heaven, and thus be blessed with the salvation of the last and final Dispensation; and that, too, with many millions who never came into any knowledge of, nor were obedient to, its light and principles. For every man will receive only *according to his own works:* as saith the Spirit, I will give to every man according as his *works* shall be.

If all men go direct to heaven at death, as Whittemore, of the Boston *Trumpet*, taught, and as many Universalists continue to teach, then these lines are literally true—

"....Judas with a cord
Outstript his Lord and got to heaven first."

It is well known that no scholar could, in mere rudimental schools, obtain that complete and finished education which is dispensed or to be obtained exclusively in the highest seminaries of learning.

Now, the First Dispensation was but as a schoolmaster to the Second; and Moses was only a schoolmaster, to bring souls to Christ; just as the first Christian Dispensation was only "in part," and served as a stepping-stone, or "schoolmaster," to fit and prepare its subjects for the second Christian Church, or Fourth, last, and final Dispensation, in which the "great mystery of godliness," which has been "hid from the foundation of the world," is fully revealed and finished.

cxv., 16, "The heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's." Consequently, God is not exclusively in any of the heavens of the Dispensations to which the human family will only attain, When Christ had done his work among the souls and spirits of the first and second Dispensations, he ascended to his Father, "far above all heavens," from whence he came; for "he"—the Christ, *not Jesus*—"that ascended was the same that also descended."

This system effectually destroys all *Sectarianism*, for it unfolds the progressive nature of the work of God with man, from age to age, aud explains why man must progress, or change, from "faith to faith," step by step, from one Dispensation to another, until he comes to the *last*, or "perfect day;" in which there is no darkness or error, and in which all the isolated truths of all sects, nations, kindreds, tongues, and people are united; and in which it is entirely in the power of every individual to "work out" his own full salvation and perfect redemption from the nature and effects of the fall of Adam and of himself through lust; "for all have sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression."

God is not an arbitrary being, but "that which a man sows, he will also reap," and *nothing else.*

But if there be no foundation, or "if the foundation be destroyed, what can even the most righteous do?" How could any individual soul, under a dark germinal Dispensation, however faithful he might have been, arrive at that exalted state and condition that is only the fruit of obedience to one in which "the light of the moon" (reason) "is as the light of the sun" (revelation), "and the light of the sun as the light of seven days"—seven cycles in the Church?

Individuals living under an imperfect or evil system may desire to be better than that system; even as individuals living under a perfect system may come short of perfect obedience thereto. And herein the wisdom as well as the goodness of God is manifested, in calling individuals out of the Babylou system of the world, wherein "he who departeth from evil maketh himself a prey," saying, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

Therefore, never until individual man shall be placed under the influence and operation of a *perfect system*, can he, either in this world or the next, so sin, or fall, or be lost, as to be beyond the power of such perfect system to resurrect him.

And now we affectionately, but confidently, recommend to

all honest inquiring minds, of every class and party, to investigate the faith, principles, and doctrines of the Church of Christ's second appearing—the Church of true *Believers.*

For God is no respecter of persons, but, rather, "has concluded *all*" nations, and people, and tongues, "in" a state of "sin" and spiritual darkness, and unbelief of the Fourth and last Dispensation, and of its *true Church*, that *through it* he might, in the end, "have mercy upon *all.*"

APPENDIX.

SECTS.—A sect is an ecclesiastical body having its origin in some spiritual manifestation or Divine revelation, and existing upon the *record* thereof. In this sense, the *general Christian Church* (Christendom) is a *sect*. It professes to have descended from, and to be a continuation of, the primitive Church, which was founded by and upon Divine revelation;—revelation was the life-blood by which its existence was continued. Buddhism is a sect; Catholicism is a *sect* within a sect.

But this great Christian *sect* acknowledges, and even authoritatively affirms, that revelation ceased soon after the days of the Apostles; thereby effectually cutting off *its own claim* to be a *living* body, or church—anything, indeed, but a *dead body*, a mere *sect* that only lives upon the remembrance or record of the original and bygone revelations contained in the Bible.

A sect looks *back;* a Church looks *forward* and ascends upward. The highest aspirations of the former never *do* ascend above the measure of its *founders*, while those of the latter reach to God, by an endless progression, through the means of continual revelation, or intercourse with the spirit-world, in the *Divine order*.

Christ, in his first advent, established a Church upon earth, of which Jesus was the *visible Head*—Peter, John, and others were his successors—and the Apostles were members thereof in common with other believers. This was not a sect, but a true *living Church*.

Sectarianism is defined by Webster as being "a disposition to dissent from the established Church or predominant religion." This was just what the Jews charged the first Christian

Church with. They called it a "pernicious *sect*," which was "turning the world upside down."

But Jesus and his followers assumed that they actually understood, believed, and carried into practice the genuine principles of the law of Moses, as did none of the Jews themselves; in fact, they claimed to be "Israelites indeed," *inwardly*, being circumcised in heart and in spirit by the *truth*—"the testimony of Jesus."

And, as all were not Israelites who were of Israel (for if they had believed Moses, they would also have believed and followed Jesus), so did he foresee it would be with Christians. Many would say, "Lord, Lord," and "name the name of Christ," without "departing from all iniquity," who consequently never knew Christ, and unto whom he would say, "Depart from me; *I never knew you*."

Jesus also foresaw that the *Church itself* would be destroyed and "trodden underfoot of the Gentiles forty and two months;" and that during that period or night of antichrist (*i.e.*, until Christ should make another—his second—appearance, and set up a more perfect Christian Church) "witnesses" would arise, and would "prophesy in sackcloth and ashes;" that is, in a state of suffering and mourning.

When revelation ceased in the Church, it fell—perished; and then the Spirit began to rise up and bring forth "witnesses" (heretics) one after another, in every age and generation, who exceedingly troubled the repose of the *now dead* false Church, or "beast," or "whore of Babylon," millions of whom suffered martyrdom at her hands, by rack, faggot, and gibbet, and by the various devilish machinery of the infernal Inquisition, for the testimony which they bore against the errors and abominations of that "mother of harlots," the Roman Catholic Christian Church.

Many of the orders in that Church were founded by "witnesses" who had received a revelation of some truth, or truths, by which they were impelled to live a more holy and self-denying life than the great body of the subjects of the "kingdom of

the beast" were wont to live. These, so long as they received outward persecution, prospered in the spirit. But when the "beast" canonised them, "their testimony was finished;" and "the beast, which ascendeth up out of the bottomless pit" of ease, worldly honour, fleshly lusts, and self-indulgence, "made war with them, and overcame them, and killed them;" and their "dead bodies" (sects) lay aboveground unburied; for now, being enrolled among the powers and orders of the false Church, "they give their power" and influence, which had been acquired by their previous gift of Divine revelation, "unto the beast."

This was the true origin, not only of the hundreds of sects which "lie in the streets of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt"—Babylon, *confusion*—in the "kingdom of the beast"—*Catholicism;* but also of the hundreds of sects in the kingdom of the "image of the beast"—*Protestantism.* These are the "dead bodies" of "witnesses" (who have delivered their message, or "testimony") which their destroyers "will not suffer to be put into graves," out of sight. They are those whom *persecution* failed to kill, but who were overcome and destroyed by the flattery, kindness, and friendship of the spirit of the world, and who thence became the chief and warmest supporters of the *governments of "this world,"* for false *civil* governments can only be sustained and continued by false *religions*, and therefore the only hope of true liberty of faith and conscience, of speech, and of the press, lies in an entire and perfect separation of Church and State—pure *Republicanism*, on the basis of Materialism, recognising the equality of the sexes in all the relations of law and government.

Each of the "witnesses"—as, for instance, the Moravians, Dunkards, Swedenborgians, Methodists, Quakers, &c., &c.—received and proclaimed some one or more of the truths which compose the "testimony of Jesus" as it is set forth in the foregoing "*Tests.*" And thus "God has not left himself without a witness" to nearly every one of the doctrines that

form the system of the true Church of Christ in his second appearing.

War, slavery, temperance, dress, language, civil government, private property, and even the virgin life, &c., &c., have all been recognised by one or other of the "witnesses," during some periods of the *apostacy*.

The joyous manifestations of the Spirit, at even a temporary and partial deliverance from sin, have by some been exhibited in shouting, leaping, dancing, singing, &c.; thus foreshadowing even the form of worship of the true Church, wherein "the virgin should rejoice in the dance, both old men and young together."

PARTIES.—The *natural reformers* of the day are rather *parties* than sects. These are the earthly man, and are mostly composed of those who have received some of the testimonies which the "witnesses" have delivered; as, for instance, the Peace Societies, Abolition Societies, Temperance Societies, Land Reforms, Woman's Rights, &c.; which testimonies originated in Divine revelation through some of the "witnesses," who are now themselves "*dead bodies*" of people, even in relation to these very reforms. It is often the case that reformers are very angular—they see but one side of the shield of truth.

Thus do the great radical and beautiful truths which formed the perfect "testimony of Jesus Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," ready to be revealed and brought forth in his Church, like the materials for Solomon's temple, lie on the mountains of a foreign land—the *world*. Here and there, stones and timbers are waiting for the great Master Builder, Christ, to come and give the word of command to build the temple of the Most High God. "And the time is come for the Lord's house to be built;" the Master has appeared, and has pointed out to the builders the corner-stone, celibacy;* and the temple goes bravely up, although

* According to a Masonic tradition, "after the materials (which had been previously prepared) for Solomon's temple were upon the ground,

it be in "troublous times," and surrounded by enemies. (See Nehemiah iv.)

Now, with what propriety shall a system composed of such universal principles and truths, some of which may be found in every combination of human beings upon earth, and more or less in every individual of each combination, be designated *sectarian?*—a system adapted to the primitive creation of man; meeting, comprehending, providing for, and supplying all his real rational wants of both soul and body; which looks upon all men as *brethren*, and considers the whole human family (without exception), whether in this or the spirit-world, as being in a *salvable* state, and capable of hearing, receiving, and obeying the truth—even "the whole counsel of God."

If this—the most merciful and catholic religion—constitutes those who live it *a sect*, why then it is, or will be, a sect just as Moses' rod was a serpent, and will remain so only until it has swallowed up *every other* sect.

For this Church, purely eclectic, will own and bless all the good and all the truths that are in every sect and in every reform; and it will ultimately, under God and his Christ-Angels, absorb and embody within its world-wide system every one of these; and thus it will "gather together in Christ all things, both which are in heaven and upon earth," necessary to the building of the "house of the Lord," which is yet to be "a house of prayer for *all nations*."

Organisations.—There is, in the present day, among many of the true friends of progress, a strong feeling to denounce

and the workmen were ready to commence building, the *corner-stone* could not be found; for the stone which had been prepared and marked for that purpose was utterly rejected by them all, it being thought impossible (from its uncouth and uncomely appearance) that *it* could be the chief stone in so glorious a building. But when Solomon, who had been sent for, came, that which had been so despised and rejected proved to be the very chief corner-stone."

Thus, even in the figurative building, "the stone which the builders rejected became the head stone of the corner." (See Ps. cxviii., 22; and 1 Pet. ii., 6—8.)

and destroy *sectarianism*. It carries some so far as to lead them to oppose *all* organisations, civil and religious. This, too, is (in a measure) the result of the testimony of a "witness;" for "Babylon is fallen, is fallen;" and it is by the operation of this very spirit of *disorganisation* that she does fall. "God has put it into their hearts to hate the whore, strip her naked, and to burn her with" the "fire" of truth.

The work which is given them to do is to pull down and destroy all false systems and organisations; and in doing it they become so zealously engaged, that they forget that God's design is only that a *true organisation* may have a place wherein to exist. But the process and work of tearing down old buildings, and clearing away the rubbish, is not usually committed to those who possess a capacity for building. Iconoclasts are not the highest types of the race. The world calls for constructors. The axe, the hatchet, the pick, and the crowbar, with which to demolish, are in the hands of some; while the line, the plummet, and the square, with which to organise and build, are in the hands of *others*. These live on earth immortal.

Shaker communities have, in their own quiet way, carefully watched the great body of Spiritualists, estimated by Judge Edmonds, of New York (who has visited the Mount Lebanon Society), to number eleven millions. In the spirit of prophecy we saw the whole of this spiritual movement, with its jarring confusion, and recorded it in our manuscripts and "rolls," before and just after the first recognised "rappings" near Rochester, nearly a quarter of a century since. It is patent to all candid minds that as yet Spiritualists have signally failed to perfect any durable organisation. State organisations, societies, and seances have been conceived, framed, and officered. They breathed, moved, wrangled, died. What was the matter? What ailed them? Believers know full well. Can there be union between "Christ and Belial"—the heavens and the hells? Incongruous elements cannot blend in unison. A reckless, self-sufficient individualism must necessarily be a disorganising force. Spiritualism is that other "Angel that John

saw come down out of heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory." (Rev. xviii., 1.) It is the Angel of light—not of heat, not of love, not of religion, but of light—rational light and knowledge; and as such, this Angel (Spiritualism) has done great good: and when Spiritualists further progress—when they feel the Pentecostal baptism, becoming more humble and religious, they will be able to construct more lasting organisations—not as ends, but as "John Baptists," preparatory to a flying towards, and an increase of, the Christ-Church—the Church of humanity—the Church of Believers in the Second Coming. Following the Angel spoken of in the 18th chapter of Revelations, John saw another "Angel standing in the sun, crying, Come, gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God." (Rev. xix., 17.) This was the Angel of religious revivals—the Angel of love and spiritual union. Emma Hardinge caught the inspiration of this Angel's message in a recent lecture delivered in London upon the "signs in earth and heaven." She says:—

Can we come to any other conclusion than that this Pentecostal day is indeed to lead to the coming of a second Messiah? He is not yet in our midst; we are only listening to the voices that are crying in the wilderness. These voices have come to us in the outward form of a spiritual science; but I do know that the baptism of fire is yet awaiting us. When we shall be found worthy to partake of it—when we can advance a step beyond this wilderness of phenomena to wait for the higher light which shall reveal to us the solemn truths of religion—sure, sure it will come. That kingdom for which we have been praying so earnestly, but so ignorantly, for 1800 years, seems, to our eyes, now to be dawning upon us. Our spirit-friend is already by our side; already the illumination of the torch he carries has lighted up my soul, and shown me a wonderful arcanum of forces I have not dreamed of; already my chamber is full of the presence of these spirit-people; the stones have become preachers, sounding out words of wonderful meaning; the insensate objects that are floating around me have become teachers, giving me an assurance of motor powers in the universe I never dreamed of. The mysteries are receding, and in their place I am beholding that I am in the midst of infinity; the measure of time is passing away, and instead of that, behold, the rolling ages are only measuring and gauging the mighty depths of eternity. And these are the revealments that are making me stand still and listen to the voice that cries in the midst of them all, "Be still, and know that I am God!"

J. M. Peebles, in his "Seers of the Ages," writing wiser than he knew, says on p. 349 :—

"They sang as it were a new song, and none could learn the song but the redeemed . . . . . And the voice said, These are they which were not defiled with women. . . .They enter through the gates into the city"—city of the New Jerusalem—the Christ-Dispensation of purity that "cometh down from God out of heaven." "Starving souls" cannot find supplies on the animal plane of life. Physical commerce cannot satisfy soul-wants; that which is "born of the flesh is flesh." . . . . The tendency of the spiritually-minded is from grossness to refinement, from promiscuity to chastity—from chastity to holiness; and thence onward towards divinity. The Apostle John declared that he had passed from death unto life, because he loved the brethren. This divine love can never degenerate into licence, nor its liberty into anarchy; for it is a principle disrobed of earthly passion—a holy resurrection. When these universal love-principles are made practical, the soil will be as free as the air we breathe; the gardens will blossom and bear fruitage for all; the poor orphans will find homes of plenty; and the brows of toiling millions will be wreathed with roses—symbols of perpetual peace.

But there are, as Jesus said there would be, "many false Christs and false prophets" at about this time of his second coming. That is an evidence for—*not against*—the fact, that there are, or will be, a true Christ and true prophets—*a true organisation.* And it will surely swallow and absorb the life of every other sect and church in existence: and if the primitive Church of Christ itself had stood, and were now standing, in all its pristine glory, even *its* life, principles, and faith would be received into and be appropriated by, and its organisation would give place to, the superior light, power, and perfections of the Church of the Fourth and last Dispensation, to be manifested in the present day.

For, as the Prophet declared, "In the days of these kings will the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed. And the kingdom shall not be left to other people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms" (sects), "and it shall stand for ever." (Dan. i., 44.)

As the Dispensations supplanted and succeeded each other,

even so did the "witnesses" *supplant and succeed each other.* There could be no increase in any other way, as each one (although originating in Divine revelation or spiritual manifestations) disbelieved in its continued and increasing operation. They invariably looked back to their founders, Moses, or Calvin, or Wesley, or Fox, or Murray, or some one else, even as each individual now looks back to his former spiritual experience (if he ever had any); and this the Protestant tells in meeting, as worship, even as the Catholic tells his beads.

It is not thus with the just and true Church; its path is that of the individual *perfect* man and woman, of whom it is (or will be) constituted, and "shines brighter and brighter unto the perfect day," when God will be all and in all.

It is therefore clearly impossible for that kingdom to be ever "given to another people." For "the horn made war with the saints ('witnesses'), and prevailed against them," only "*until* the Ancient of Days" (Christ) "came; and judgment was" then "given to the *saints of the Most High*," whose transcendent privilege it shall be to "possess the kingdom for ever and ever."

The rise of this glorious kingdom, in its earlier stages, is as "the day of small things," and is prefigured by "a little stone," "a grain of mustard seed," "a little leaven," &c., &c.; yet is it very expansive and progressive in its nature and character.

Moreover, this, the true Church, is to be a normal growth and outbirth of the great *humanity*—the end of Sectarianism—the culmination of all reforms—the *ultimatum* of the universal desire and deeply-rooted hope for something better than mankind have yet realised upon earth; and *not* some violent disruption of the eternal connection existing between *cause* and *effect*, as the orthodox believe, which belief the *Second Adventists* laboured most assiduously, though quite sincerely, to incarnate and bring to pass; against which may be received as evidence the general tenor of Scripture prophecy.

Thus, by Isaiah, the Lord saith: "Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart;" and "he who blesses himself in the *earth* shall bless himself in the God of *truth*, because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes. For, behold, I create *a new heaven and a new earth*, and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And they shall build houses and inhabit them; and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not *plant*, and *another* eat; they shall not *build*, and *another* inhabit. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble. For they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord. And it shall come to pass that, *before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.*" (Is. lxv.)

This will put an effectual end to *Sectarianism*, as it is defined in the beginning of this article.

Thus it is seen that the relation subsisting between God and the true Church on earth is, or will be, that of a living Father and Mother—a unity in duality—to their living sons and daughters; and is sustained by a perpetual and practical revelation, through which is effected such a development and exhibition of spiritual light and power as will redeem, shield, and protect their recipients from the power and influence of evil to an extent that is, by the Spirit, with great force and propriety called "*a new heaven.*"

And also is seen that establishment of those just and righteous principles which regard the distribution and use of all the elements essential to man's existence and subsistence in this physical world, which the same Divine spirit of prophecy fitly and appropriately designates "*a new earth,*" in which should dwell righteousness and peace.

Thus it is not *names* or profession, but principles only, that must determine and decide what *is* and what is *not Sectarianism.* "By this," said Jesus, "shall all men know

that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another"—a principle.

So that, whether the desire of any persons be to find the true Church of Christ if it be in existence, or to establish it if it be not, it is absolutely necessary that they know its real marks, characteristics, or principles; that by them they may judge, decide, or work. One thing is certain, and that is, that the subjects of that salvation Church will "be an afflicted and poor people" (Zeph. iii., 12); to redeem themselves and others, they will have to suffer as Jesus and his Apostles suffered, to die as they died, and to be made alive as they were made alive.

This is the Divine method. All higher births are through sufferings; all resurrections are through death to something that is lower; and all ascensions are preceded by tears and Gethsemanes.

And if in them, of the resurrection order, be truly concentrated all the light and the spirit of the primitive Church and of the "witnesses," in them also will arise all the *temptations* of the primitive Church and witnesses; and where these were tried and fell, those will also be tried—but must stand.

This will make "a straight and narrow road," not for the Church collectively only, but for every individual member thereof; for into it will "many be called, and few chosen;" that is, but few in proportion to the number called will enter and "make their calling and election sure" by obedience to its principles; for, "through the gates into that holy city can nothing enter that worketh abomination or that loveth or maketh a lie." (Rev. xxii., 27.)

SHAKERISM.

EXTRACT FROM "HINTS TOWARDS REFORM," BY H. GREELEY (PP. 278—280).

WITH the Shakers, so nicknamed, I have some personal acquaintance, and I am not ashamed to own that I have been instructed and cheered by them. They have never been fairly appreciated by the world. Their utter condemnation of marriage and of individual property, the grotesque ceremonies of Divine worship, and their incessant declamation against all departures from celibacy as impure and sinful, have repelled and disgusted nearly all who are not of their own body. But might not a more expansive philosophy, a more liberal culture, discover in these very excesses a moral worthy of the gravest attention?

Are our relations as men and women so universally pure and exalted that we may rightly despise those who, unable to separate the palpable evil from the latent good, reject both together? Is exclusive property so beneficent a feature of our social order, as practically exemplified around us, that we may fairly stigmatise those who, not needing its incitements to thrift and industry, see fit to decline them?

The peculiarities of Shaker worship I readily abandon to the ridicule of the caviller, only wishing that theirs were the only absurdities committed in attempting to honour our Father in heaven, and that no religious errors more popular and more enduring than theirs were worse than simply ridiculous.

When all that may be said against these simple-minded ascetics has been freely admitted, there is yet left enough in their character and history to challenge our admiration.

They present the sublime and hope-inspiring spectacle of a community founded and built up on the conquest of the most

inexorable appetites; lust, avarice, ambition, revenge—these are not merely discountenanced by the social economy of the Shakers, but this economy is based on their entire crucifixion. Nor can I see how any man can rationally conclude, as some have nevertheless asserted, that all this show of subduing the appetites is hypocrisy and a delusion. I can conceive no earthly motive for practising so much outward self-denial at so great inconvenience, and with no hope of honour or popularity, but a certainty of the reverse, if not based on obedience to an inward conviction.

The uncharitable theory supposes a refinement of absurdity and self-annoyance which never yet possessed for any period the brain of any one sane man, much less of a whole community for ages.

Let us, then, profit by the lessons which these enthusiasts read us, while discarding their unpardonable errors. Let us remember that they have solved for us the problem of the possibility, the practicability, of a social condition from which the twin curses, pauperism and servitude, shall be utterly banished. They have shown how pleasant may be the labours, how abundant the comforts, of a community wherein no man aspires to be lord over his brethren—no man grasps for himself, but each is animated by a spirit of devotion to the common good.

When I have stood among the quiet homes of this unaspiring, unpoetical people, and marked how they have steadily, surely, advanced from abject poverty to amplest competence—when I have observed how their patient but never excessive toil has transformed rugged barrenness into smiling fertility and beauty—how could I refrain from thinking lightly of that blind dogmatism which asserts the impossibility of inducing men to labour except for their own selfish gratification, and affirms the necessity of the stimulus of personal acquisition to save mankind from sinking back into the darkness and destitution of barbarism?

A LETTER OF INFORMATION

TO PERSONS DESIROUS OF BECOMING MEMBERS

OF THE

ORDER OF SHAKERS.

—o—

All who are desirous of obtaining information, with the view of uniting with the Society, may correspond with

ELDER F. W. EVANS,

MOUNT LEBANON,

COLUMBIA CO.,

NEW YORK, U.S.A.

Persons, male or female, having read the publications of Believers, and endorsing their principles, may become members of the Order on the following conditions :—

By paying all just debts to the best of their ability, and fulfilling all legal and equitable contracts, and righting all wrongs as far as possible.

If over fifty years of age, or having small children, they had better correspond previous to coming ;

Or if applicants have much property, or are in a prosperous business, it is well to write before making any important changes.

Single persons, who are free, may come at their *own option*, bearing in mind the important fact that Shakerism is "Religious Communism."

Inquirers living in Europe may obtain all information, as far as printed publications can supply it, on making application to

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Where is published Human Nature, monthly, price 6d., and The Medium and Daybreak, weekly, price 1d., which give frequent information on Shakerism.

A careful study of the works on the following page is earnestly recommended to all who are interested in the subject.

WORKS ON THE SHAKERS,

OR

UNITED SOCIETY OF BELIEVERS IN CHRIST'S SECOND APPEARING.

RELIGIOUS COMMUNISM. A Lecture by F. W. Evans (Shaker), of Mount Lebanon, Columbia Co., New York, U.S.A., delivered in St. George's Hall, London, Sunday evening, August 6th, 1871; with Introductory Remarks by the Chairman of the Meeting, Mr. Hepworth Dixon. Also some Account of the Extent of the Shaker Communities, and a Narrative of the Visit of Elder Evans to England. An Abstract of a Lecture by Rev. J. M. Peebles, and his testimony in regard to the Shakers. Price 6d.

SHAKER COMMUNISM; or, Tests of Divine Inspiration. The Second Christian or Gentile Pentecostal Church, as Exemplified by Seventy Communities of Shakers in America. By F. W. Evans. Price, 1s. 6d.; cloth, 2s. 6d.

This work traces the progress of the Church through the three previous dispensations, culminating in the Shaker, or Second Pentecostal Church. It presents in a clear and forcible manner the essential religious principles upon which Shakerism is founded, and upon which alone a community can exist.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A SHAKER. Being the Life and Experiences of Elder Evans. To which is added, "An Exposition of the Apocalypse, and its Bearings upon Shakerism." With photographic portrait of the Author. Cloth, 3s. 6d.

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THE SHAKER. A monthly paper issued by the Order. Annual subscription, 5s.

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